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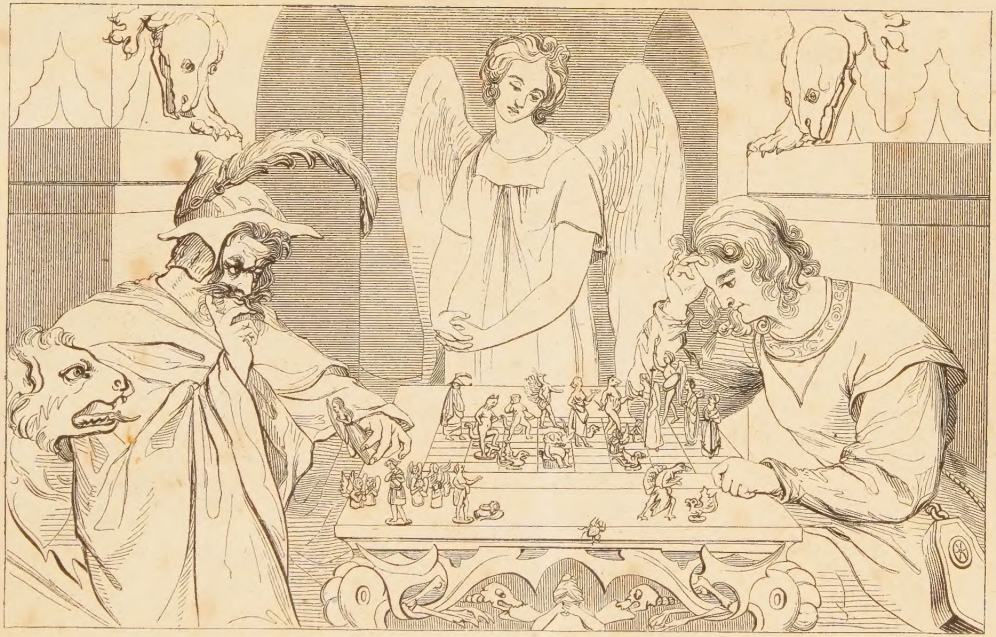

THE GAME OF LIFE.—Page 127.

YOUNG MEN ADMONISHED:

BY A

SERIES OF LECTURES.

JOSEPH T. THOMPSON,

PASTOR OF THE BROADWAY TABERNACLE CHURCH.

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TO THE

YOUNG MEN OF NEW-YORK,

MANY HUNDREDS OF WHOM

ATTENDED UPON THE DELIVERY OF THESE LECTURES,

This Volume,

DEVOTED TO THEIR INTERESTS,

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

To divest others of prejudice in reading this little volume, I would willingly for the time being divest myself of the title of a clergyman. In fact I have endeavored throughout these lectures to speak merely as one young man to others. And yet the young man has no truer friend than the faithful minister; and it would be for the temporal as well as the spiritual advantage of young men to seek the acquaintance of the ministers of the city as they have opportunity. Without the formality of an introduction they will always find a welcome, and will receive, if nothing more, good wishes and kind words. They will find too that ministers can talk about other things besides the common topics of the pulpit, and that they enter heartily into whatever concerns the welfare of their fellow men.

A flagrant case of dishonesty in this community, with the particulars of which the newspapers were filled, induced me to announce a lecture to young men upon that subject. The attendance was unexpectedly large, and the apparent interest was highly gratifying. It was computed that a thousand young men were present at that lecture. (April 23d). I therefore announced for the next Sabbath evening, a lecture on intemperance, and thus on from week to week as new subjects were suggested, until the

approach of summer admonished me to close the course. I mention this, not so much by way of apology for the hasty composition of the lectures, as because a considerable part of each lecture was necessarily extemporaneous, and I may not in all cases have recalled the thoughts and expressions uttered so that they will be recognized by those who heard them.

While engaged in the investigation of some of the topics treated of in the lectures, and especially of gambling, I was surprised at the pertinent developments which were made, both through the public prints and by private testimony. And surely when the hard earnings of the poor, deposited in a savings bank, are hazarded at the gaming table; when employers are defrauded by gambling clerks; when our great thoroughfare is crowded with gorgeous saloons, many of which have private apartments for gambling, and one of which has a subterranean passage to a gambling house in the rear, by which those who desire secrecy may enter unobserved; when the temptations to vice are so abundant, and the effects of those temptations are so appalling;—no apology can be required for dealing thus pointedly with specific evils.

I have reason to believe that the delivery of the lectures did some good, and I hope that the publication of them will do more. J. P. T.

New-York, July 25th, 1848.

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LECTURE I.

TEMPTATIONS TO DISHONESTY.

MARK X. 19—*Defraud not.*

THIS command is closely allied to the tenth of the decalogue. Covetousness and fraud go hand in hand. Hence, in enumerating the precepts of the decalogue, it was quite natural that Jesus—who always regarded the spirit rather than the letter of the law—should vary the phraseology, so as to bring out more fully the meaning of a commandment, or to show its application to a given course of conduct. Jesus said to the young ruler, "Thou knowest the commandments; Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor thy father and mother:"—and instead of "Thou shalt not covet," "*Defraud not;*" do not by deception or artifice

deprive another of his property or his rights; do not covet any thing that is his, lest you should be tempted fraudulently to appropriate it to yourself; do not take advantage of another in a bargain, or in any business transaction; do not impose upon his ignorance, nor abuse his confidence.

This precept is authoritative; as much so as any of the original ten commandments. It is virtually one of those commandments, interpreted and applied by the great lawgiver himself.

From this command of Christ, which was originally addressed to a young man of wealth and of standing in society, I propose to urge upon young men the duty of HONESTY.

Let it not be regarded as an insinuation against the character of young men generally, that I have selected such a topic as particularly appropriate to them. It is not rendered appropriate, so far as I am aware, by any general practice of fraud among them, by any general lack of honor and integrity, or by any natural proclivity to dishonesty; but by the peculiar temptations which surround them—

temptations made seductive by example, and plausible through the loose morality of trade.

A sincere regard for the character of young men, and a desire that they should do honor to themselves, and to the community whose affairs they are soon to control, lead me to press upon them the importance of strict fidelity in all their business transactions. I know, too, something of the dangers of young men, and have witnessed the ruin of some who began life with a good character, and with fair prospects.

Young men of limited means, in a great city, are strongly tempted to be dishonest. The temptation arises from various sources; is sometimes insignificant in its origin, and insidious in its approach, though frequently fatal in its results.

In this, as in almost every crime, the first steps are hardly observed even by the transgressor himself. Stealing, downright theft, is an act which most young men, on going into the employment of a merchant, would think it an insult to be cautioned against; for they would regard it not only as criminal, but as

mean and disgraceful. They would rather take up with any occupation, live upon any fare, wear any apparel, than *steal* the value of a farthing. And yet when some selfish gratification is greatly coveted, these same conscientious young men will sometimes overcome their scruples, and will appropriate to themselves the property of another, to any extent consistent with safety.

How is such a change in their character effected? Not suddenly; perhaps not even consciously; but by a gradual course of self-deception; by a delusion practised on their minds, through an inordinate desire for some gratification not honestly within their reach.

It may be thought beneath the dignity of the pulpit, to allude to some of the chief temptations to dishonesty that beset young men. But the dignity of the pulpit consists in faithfully exposing sin, and in counselling, in exhorting, and warning the transgressor, so that he may see his danger and escape it. A minister should feel a lively interest in every thing that pertains to moral conduct, and should apply his instructions to the details of every day

life. Nothing can be accounted trivial, which goes to form the character, or to affect the welfare of an immortal being. I proceed therefore, without further preamble, to enumerate some of the modes in which young men are led into dishonest practices.

1. *Extravagance in dress* often leads young men into dishonesty. Two species of dishonesty are practised, in order to indulge a fondness for dress beyond what is reasonable and proper; sometimes the means of gratifying this passion are procured by fraud; and sometimes those who furnish the various articles of apparel, in which the ambitious and vain but penniless youth displays his coxcombry, are defrauded of their dues.

A young man from the country, comes into New-York, and obtains a situation as a clerk in a large mercantile establishment. Possibly he has never before been in a city. He has lived on a farm, or has assisted his father in some honorable handicraft. He has received a good rudimental education in the common school, and perhaps has even fathomed the mysteries of theoretical book-keeping at the

village academy. But he knows little of this great busy world; little of the laws of trade or of the laws of fashion; of prices current, of bills of lading, of checks, discounts and deposits; of bills of entry, bills of exchange, bills of parcels, bills receivable and bills payable; of staple commodities, 'quiet,' 'firm,' 'heavy' or 'looking up,' of money 'tight' or money 'easy;' little in short beyond the fact, that men do business to get money, and that their great object seems to be to get it easily, and then to hold it tight.

He finds a larger stock in the single store in which he is placed, than would suffice for the whole trade of the town from which he came; and a business which is computed not by hundreds nor yet by thousands of dollars, absolutely bewilders him. On the whole, he receives rather a large idea to begin with, of the magic power of *money*, and also of his own prospects, in comparison with those of his brothers and playmates on the farm or in the workshop at home.

But with all his simplicity of character and inexperience, having, we will suppose, a natu-

ral shrewdness, he soon seizes hold of certain changes which he must make, to adapt himself to his new position.

One of the first things that he notices is, how far superior to his own are the style and quality of dress among the senior clerks. He has a new suit, it is true, plain, neat and becoming, albeit in the making of it, the last plates from Paris were not consulted. He even felt a little proud of it at home, on his last Sabbath in the village church; but now he has a vague feeling of awkwardness, and it cannot be disguised, that there is something in his appearance which affords merriment to his companions. His salary however is so small, and his notions of economy are as yet so just and proper, that he must content himself for the present with such a wardrobe as he can afford. And why should he not? Why not be manly enough to wear an unfashionable garment as long as it will be of service to him? It is well enough to have a garment made in the fashion at the time, but it is never well for a young man of limited resources, to cast aside a half-worn suit for the sake of the fashion.

But our young friend soon learns, that with young men in the city, dress is a very important matter. He blushes at the pattern of his coat or vest, as if he had reason to be ashamed of it; and he resolves to adopt the city fashions at the earliest possible day, at least before he shall revisit his native village. His first money goes for dress,—every dollar of it; and in that outlay, he begins on a small scale a career of prodigality, which shall ere long plunge him deeply in debt and in dishonesty. Unless he possesses an uncommon degree of prudence, a fondness for dress will become a passion with him, which he will gratify almost without limit. As his salary increases, he will become reckless of expense:—if he obtains credit he will abuse it, till finding himself straitened for means, he will borrow from one and another more than he will be able conveniently to repay, and perhaps will 'borrow' from his employer what he never intends to repay. Do I seem to trifle with my subject, and to entertain you with discourse more suited to the mercer's show-room than to the pulpit? The secret history of many a young

man's career of fraud and of infamy, will be found to have commenced at this very point: —for when first he indulged a fondness for dress, became extravagant in his desires and in his expenses for mere outward show, he suffered his foppishness to outrun his discretion, and his vanity to get the better of his virtue.

Beware then, young man, of prodigality in dress. It is often a fatal snare. You may think it mean to wear a threadbare garment, even though you cannot afford a better; but it is meaner far, to wear a coat of the finest material at the expense of the maker; and it is meanest of all, to clothe yourself richly by means of deception and fraud. Better are shreds and patches with an honest heart, than purple and fine linen with hypocrisy.

Since writing the above, I have heard of a young man being arrested by his employer, for having defrauded him of goods and money to the amount of $200 and upwards, which he had appropriated to the decoration of his person. A suspicion of his dishonesty was awakened by the fact, that he appeared almost

daily with some new article of dress or of jewelry—a kind of extravagance which could not have been supported by his salary alone.

2. Young men are led into dishonest practices, *by indulging in many foolish and expensive habits and pleasures.* The habit of smoking—too insignificant, you may think, to be noticed here—has often much to do with the deterioration of a young man's character. It is a worthless habit—and is commonly, though not always, associated with idleness and dissipation. It is in the end an expensive habit. Sixpence a day, is a mere trifle; but it is more than $20 a year, expended on a worthless object; and that, for a young man of moderate salary, dependent on his own exertions for future business capital, is a large item to throw away. But I allude to the habit here, on account of its tendency to make one reckless in his expenses, and so to bring him under a strong temptation to dishonesty.

The habit of frequenting bar-rooms, and of indulging in the use of intoxicating drinks, has a similar tendency. I shall not here enter upon the subject of temperance in its relations

to young men, as it is my purpose to devote a whole lecture to that topic. What I wish now to impress upon you, is the connection between the habit of squandering time and money in a drinking-saloon, and those acts of fraud into which young men, once conscientious and upright, are sometimes betrayed.

A young man cannot resort to such places without squandering money, as well as sacrificing moral principle. He must 'treat' when his turn comes or lose caste. But he will soon find, if living on an average salary, that such demands—the demands of his own appetite, and the demands of custom—are beginning to exceed his income. Then comes his strong temptation. Shall he forsake his company? shall he give up an excitement which he has learned to love? shall he be guilty of the meanness of sponging on his comrades, and of shirking his own debts of honor? or shall he—yes, shall he make a false entry, or rob the till, and so obtain the means of keeping up appearances? Here is the turning-point of many a young man's character and destiny. Oh, if there is a young man who hears me, who is

thus struggling between conscience and inclination, let me warn that young man, that he is on the very brink of ruin; and let me entreat him to break loose from the snare in which he is already so far entangled, and to save himself while yet he may.

Other forms of dissipation, though not grossly vicious, have the same tendency. Young men need recreation; and under this plea they will pass their evenings at a bowling-saloon, or a billiard-table, or in some wild frolic at a place where they would not care to be seen by day; and on the Sabbath will resort to the favorite haunts of pleasure in the vicinity of the city.

I speak not now of the *morality* of such a course of life, but simply of the temptation to dishonesty which it presents to young men of limited means. They wish to be considered good fellows, of easy and generous habits, fond of seeing life, and so they must spend money freely, and therefore they must obtain it freely, and in any way that offers. Sabbath-breaking, especially, often leads to dishonesty, as to other species of iniquity. He who robs God will not scruple to rob man also.

One of the most contemptible species of fraud, is that committed upon their own parents, by young men who are sent from home to obtain an education. They will squander in dissipation the means furnished for their necessary expenses, and will then exaggerate the amount of their bills to an indulgent and confiding father, and so cover their iniquity. You will hear such a young man boasting, that he has "made a cool fifty or hundred off of the old man;" when perhaps that father is toiling night and day to give him a professional education. Such conduct, so reckless, so ungrateful, is almost too despicable for notice. To cheat a widowed landlady or washerwoman, is not to be compared with it for meanness. So base do young men who think highly of themselves, become, when they give way to appetite.

3. Added to these sources of temptation to dishonesty, is the strong and fatal snare of *vicious habits*. The theater, the gaming table, and the house of infamy, not only absorb the earnings of young men, but tempt them to resort to dishonest means in order to keep up

their nightly revelry. A young man cannot frequent the theater, without falling into vicious company, and when once he is in with such company, there is no limit to the drafts upon his purse. Especially if he becomes fascinated with some frail and sinful creature, one schooled in all the arts of deception, who knows how to enlist his sympathies with misfortune, so as to restrain his disgust at crime, will he lavish upon her his presents of money, of jewelry and articles of dress, till he has exhausted both his private means, and his credit among friends; and then, if he is not delivered from the snare, he will tax his ingenuity with schemes of fraud which may elude detection, in order still to deck the artful mistress of his passion.

The bold frauds of clerks upon their employers, can almost uniformly be traced in their origin, to a desire in the culprit to practice lewdness with an appearance of gentility, and to meet the extravagant expenses of a vicious life.

A merchant of this city, in passing a theater, saw one of his own clerks entering the house

in a partial disguise. He followed him unobserved, saw to what part of the theater he went, what company he selected, and how he conducted himself. From what he witnessed, he made up his mind to watch that young man closely in future, feeling that he was unworthy of confidence, and that he had entered upon a career of dissipation and extravagance, which would sooner or later call for some act of fraud, in order to carry it through. Not long after, this young man came to his employer on a Sabbath morning, and told him with much apparent consternation, that his store was on fire: he kept the keys, and on going down to change his dress, he had found the counting-room in a blaze, and with much difficulty had extinguished the flames. The merchant hastened to his store, but on reaching it, instead of attempting to discover how the fire had originated, he seized the young man resolutely by the collar, and said, 'I know all about this, sir, how much have you taken?' The terrified clerk acknowledged his guilt, and at once restored the entire contents of the safe, which he had stolen, expecting to conceal the theft

by the fire which his own hands had kindled.

That visit to the theater gave the clue to his character.

A young man whose employer had discharged him upon suspicion of dishonesty, was recently arrested on the charge of having obtained the property of another under false pretences:—he having borrowed money and a watch, which he had given to the harlot who held him in her toils.

There is no more fruitful source of dishonesty among young men, than the habit of dallying with the baits and enticements of such a character. As there is no influence over the mind of man, so pure and so elevating as that of woman in her native loveliness, neither is there any so utterly debasing as that of woman when she has fallen.

Should I forbear to speak of these things? Ah me! shall I never lose the dread vision of him who expiated on the scaffold the crime to which he had been hurried by lust! And with that vision before me, can I cease to warn young men of the same fatal snare?

Of gambling, in this connection, I need not speak at length—for *all gambling is dishonesty.* Gambling is gaming for money or some other stake. He who sits down to such a game, hopes to obtain the property of another, not as a gift by his free consent, nor by rendering a fair equivalent for it, but in a way which no rule of right, no true principle of honor can sanction. Aside from the frauds practised in the game on either side, the game itself is nothing but a *fraud* in principle from beginning to end.

Now gaming is always fascinating, even when engaged in for mere recreation, and without stakes of any sort. But when it is resorted to with the hope of gain, the excitement becomes intense; prudence forsakes the fevered mind, and stakes are increased as either gains or losses multiply, till money is hazarded with a recklessness bordering on desperation.

A splendid entertainment, abundance of wine, an elegant parlor, a polite and attentive host, a select company, and a well-furnished bank, prepare the youthful gamester to be

fleeced by a practised dealer. At first his luck—for who ever began to play without finding luck upon his side, in small bets?—his luck inspires confidence, and quickens his excitement:—and then, when fortune seems to frown, he is eager to retrieve his losses; he bets more and more heavily; tries once more—and yet once more, hoping that his luck will turn. The strange infatuation that seizes the mind at such a time, impels him to take that which does not belong to him, in the hope of being able to refund it from his winnings, and, if he is again unsuccessful, to take more for the sake of recovering that.

A young man of respectable connections, in the employment of my own father as a book-keeper, collected between three and four thousand dollars, for his own use, by purloining notes which his employer held for merchandise sold, and going to the drawers of the same, and offering a liberal discount for cash, under the false representation that his employer was pressed for money. When the first note should fall due, of course the fraud would be detected; so the delinquent absconded; and when he was

arrested soon after, it was found that the whole amount had been squandered at the gaming-table, where he had learned the arts of dishonesty.

4. Others are betrayed into acts of dishonesty, by *the desire to set themselves up prematurely in business.* This desire may be dictated by the best motives; such as the wish to assist a dependent mother, or to contract an honorable marriage; though it is seldom that a mind acting under such pure and generous impulses, will stoop to any thing base, even to secure its most darling object.

But a young man finds that it is no easy matter to become established in business, under the pressure of competition and of rent in a great city. He must wait a long while before a favorable opening may occur, and perhaps he may never be able essentially to change his condition. It is a pity that this was not understood by at least one half of our young men, before they had relinquished the prospect of a decent though moderate livelihood in their native place.

But to an ambitious young man, whose way

seems to be hedged up with difficulties, a temptation will sometimes present itself in the form of a promising speculation. "If I had the means," he says to himself, "if I only had the means, I see how I could double almost any amount of money, and make myself independent." But he has not the means, and he knows not where to procure them. Shall he then let slip the opportunity? shall his golden dreams vanish? shall an honorable independence, almost within his reach, be foregone for the perpetual drudgery of a clerkship? Ah! he has it now. A happy thought strikes him. In his hands, or accessible to him, there is always more or less money lying idle, and not likely to be all called for at any one time. Now he would not steal a dollar of that money for the world. He has no thought of defrauding his employer—he has too much principle for that. But what harm can there be in using that money a while for his own purposes? He must take it without the owner's consent, indeed, but he will surely be able to return it in good season, and if the transaction is secret —what harm can possibly come of it? Thus

he deludes his own conscience into an act of fraud. Crime is covered up with softening epithets. 'Lifting,' 'borrowing,' 'appropriating,' and the like terms used to denote the taking of another's property for one's own use, mean nothing less than downright *stealing*.

Sometimes a young man in haste to establish himself in business, will commit wholesale depredations upon the stock of his employers. A young merchant of Poughkeepsie, was just displaying a choice selection of goods at unprecedentedly low prices, when almost his entire stock was seized by his late employer in this city, from whose store it had been slyly conveyed away in small packages during several months previous.

The delusion of becoming independent without toil, of making haste to be rich, betrays many young men, and older men too, into acts of dishonesty, from which in their sober moments they would shrink with shame and horror. But every man's principles should be so well settled, that he can never have any

other than sober thoughts and sober moments, on such a subject as this.

5. Young men are strongly tempted to dishonest practices, *by the example of others, oftimes of their employers themselves, and in general, by the loose morality of trade.* They are witnesses of many business transactions, which, although they are within the letter of the law, are not in strict accordance with integrity. They see men of standing in the mercantile community, so bent upon gain, that they will take any advantage of others, which will not openly convict them of falsehood, or render them liable to damages for fraud. Perhaps they are instructed to consult the interests of their employers at the expense of truth; to make false representations about the cost and the quality of goods; and are given to understand, that the most acceptable clerk is he who is the greatest adept in lying.

Living in such an atmosphere, with such a low standard of morality before their eyes, educated to practise deception as a necessary part of trade, seeing around them instances of wholesale fraud, in commerce, in banking, in

the customs, in insurance, in stocks, in every thing, whose perpetrators, through some legal technicality, go 'unwhipt of justice,' and flourish on their ill-gotten gains,—what wonder is it that young men are sometimes tempted to acts of dishonesty for their own advantage, and practise upon their employers themselves the lessons which they have taught them? But I shall have more to say upon this point, when I come to speak to employers in behalf of young men.

Such are some of the chief temptations to dishonesty which beset young men in city life. I have not attempted to enumerate all the causes of dishonesty in society at large, or even in the mercantile community:—such as the prevailing spirit of extravagance and of speculation, the characteristic eagerness of our countrymen for wealth, the breach of public faith by acts of repudiation under the pressure of debt, the connivance of political parties at dishonorable means to gain their ends, the facility with which pecuniary obligations may be evaded, even through the law, or with

which the penalty of fraud, and of every crime, may be escaped, through the favor of a temporizing Executive, who rescues villains from the hand of justice in his own state, and shields them from the hand of justice reached forth after them from other states; these and other causes combine to lower the tone of public morals, to render individual acts of fraud less flagrant and less reprobated, till "truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter," and till all the channels of trade are polluted with the turbid waters of dishonesty.

But my object now is, to show young men their temptations and their danger in respect to the crime of dishonesty; and enough has been said, I trust, to give more than ordinary interest to the words of caution and advice with which I shall conclude my discourse.

Let me exhort you then, as a security against dishonesty, *to fix in your mind the supreme value of character.*

The circumstances in which you are placed, tend to give you a false impression of the value of *money.* The whole drift of life, from your point of observation, seems to be toward

wealth, as the goal of independence, of respectability and of enjoyment. *To make money* seems to be the object of every business transaction that comes under your notice; the object for which every one about you is living; and the possession of money seems to be the standard by which every man is measured. You are in danger therefore of *coveting* money, and covetousness is akin to dishonesty. Especially will this be true, if your position is such, as a confidential clerk, or in a bank, that money—the representative of other things, the fruit of industry and toil, and of skill in business—is flowing continually through your hands, like some magic stream, which has power to turn every thing it touches to its own nature, and its own use. By the handling of money—mere naked *money*—without the intervention of property which it represents, and with little experience of the labor and skill by which it is procured, you are in danger of fixing your heart upon money as the chief good, and of making it the object of life to secure the greatest amount of money possible.

But character is worth more than money. It is worth more than any other possession. It is worth more than any stock in Wall-street; —partly on account of its scarcity, and partly on account of having a determinate and a permanent value. A good character abides with a man as his richest treasure, when every thing else is gone. It is the only thing about him that God values, the only treasure that he can carry with him out of the world. Whether he is worth forty millions, or twenty, or only ten, is of little moment when he is called to leave all.

A character for strict fidelity, is worth more to a young man in the business community, than any amount of capital without it. Even dishonest men love to have honest men about them. A young man, a clerk in this city, was reproved by his employers, for not concealing by falsehood the defects of an article, of which he had consequently failed to make a sale. He frankly told them, that he could not tell a lie for them, or for any man living; and he soon left a place where he could stay only on condition of violating his conscience. Not long

after, he was instrumental in detecting a fraudulent conspiracy against that same house, the discovery of which probably saved them thousands of dollars. They were now eager to engage him again in their service; but he had too much dignity of character to accept the offer; and I am told, he could now command any reasonable amount of capital from those who know him, simply on account of having a character for honesty above the standard of one of our first commercial houses.

The late President of the late United States Bank, once dismissed a private clerk, because the latter refused to write for him on the Sabbath. The young man, with a mother dependent on his exertions, was thus thrown out of employment, by what some would call an over-nice scruple of conscience. But a few days after, when the President was requested to nominate a cashier for another bank, he recommended this very individual, mentioning the incident as a sufficient testimony to his trustworthiness. "You can trust him," said he, "for he wouldn't work for me on Sunday."

Such is principle, such is character. If ever you are tempted to a dishonest act, pause and ask yourself, What are all the gains of dishonesty that I should risk for them my character? —a portion which I have been acquiring for years; a jewel now untarnished, worth more to me than worlds, but which, once lost, worlds could not restore.

And in this connection, let me caution you against dishonesty on account of *the certainty of exposure and disgrace.* The guilt of dishonesty is not at all lessened by its secrecy. But the loss of character of which I have spoken, is the result of that exposure of dishonest practices which is almost inevitable. I say almost inevitable; for you may carry on your fraud with great adroitness, and as you suppose with entire secrecy; you may purloin goods or money in small quantities, and at long intervals; you may make false entries, may collect bills in advance, may forge a check or draft successfully;—but the day of reckoning is sure to come. The most adroit villany cannot always elude detection. Even the genteel and accomplished Edwards, who could

borrow money of statesmen and of lords, and could figure in the highest circles, must at last put on the gray uniform of Sing-Sing.

Some trivial incident will expose a long and successful course of dishonesty, or the foreseen discovery of fraud, by the scrutiny of accounts, will lead the culprit to proclaim his guilt by sudden flight. But whither shall he flee? Justice, Argus-eyed, with many hands and many feet, pursues him every where;—the telegraph publishes him in every city; a stray letter, though written in a disguised hand, gives the clue to his retreat; or the little plate on which the sun has traced his features for a friend, causes him to be recognized, though under an assumed name;—leads to the discovery of the place of his destination, and makes him a swift witness against himself. He flees to a foreign port, where, under his assumed character, he hopes to enjoy his spoils, to hide his disgrace, or at least to remain unmolested. But the first object that rises to his view, as he sets foot in a strange land, is the star of a police-officer, who has made the voyage with the utmost expedition, for the single

purpose of meeting him there. It startles him like an apparition from 'the Tombs;' he has seen such stars in his nightly visions, but he has never even dreamed of this. He surrenders what remains of that for which he threw away his place and his character, and the mysterious gentleman about whom there was so much speculation on the outward passage, returns as an abashed and sorrowing culprit. I need not draw a moral from such a tale.*

* The detection of secret guilt is so much a matter of course, that it has passed into a proverb, that "Murder will out." The same is true of other crimes. A notable example has just occurred. A young man committed several successful forgeries in Boston, and absconded with about $20,000. For a long time no clue to his retreat could be obtained. But the post-master noticed that letters frequently passed through the office addressed to a brother of the delinquent, and postmarked at a town in the interior of New Jersey; and also that this brother, himself a suspicious character, regularly deposited letters in the office to a certain address in that same town. This fact was communicated to the police; and an officer set out immediately for the place. On arriving there, he learned that a young man, a stranger, had recently came to town, in the capacity of a teacher; and finding from description that this was the forger, of whom he was in pursuit, the officer surprised him at his lodgings about two miles from the village. The culprit confessed his guilt, and surrendered

A third dissuasive from dishonesty is found in *the mental suffering which it occasions.* The moment a young man commits his first act of dishonesty, he loses his self-respect. In his own heart he despises himself; and he knows that he would be shunned and despised by others, if they understood his character. But a man who has ceased to respect himself, can have no peace of mind, no true enjoyment. "A wounded spirit who can bear?"

Then too comes the constant dread of exposure; for however successful the fraud, he knows that it does not lie beyond the possibility of discovery. With the keen sensibility of conscious guilt, he imagines himself to be suspected and watched by every one around him. He suffers mentally what no outward pleasures can compensate for, or even mitigate.

And when at length the hour of discovery comes, and he finds himself a ruined man, what language shall describe his inward tor-

himself without waiting for a requisition from the Governor of Massachusetts.

Such facts ought to be held up as a warning to others. Be sure, O youthful transgressor, "be sure your sin will find you out."

ment? In the words of another,* "as he confronts the disgrace almost face to face, how changed is the hideous aspect of his deed, from that fair face of promise with which it tempted him! Conscience, and honor, and plain honesty, which left him when they could not restrain, now come back to sharpen his anguish. Overawed by the prospect of open shame, and of the disgrace of those he loves, he cows down, and slinks out of life a frantic suicide."

But the only motive adequate fully to restrain men from fraud, is *a sense of the criminality of the least act of dishonesty.* I say the *least* act of dishonesty—for this is a crime which men are too apt to rate according to the *amount* of property appropriated wrongfully, and not according to the principle which is violated in every fraudulent act against another.

There is a false morality in that familiar nursery ditty,

> "It is a sin to steal a pin;
> Much more to steal a greater thing."

* Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

The sin lies in the *act* of stealing, and not in the amount stolen; and in the sight of God, the highest criminality may pertain to the *first* act, when principle was sacrificed, and the law was broken under the smallest possible temptation. So Jesus, the great expounder of the law, declared, when he said, "He that is unjust in the least, is," not only *will be*, but "IS unjust in much."

This sentiment is happily illustrated by Dr. Chalmers, in his Commercial Discourses:—"Christ here speaks to the man who is only half an inch within the limits of forbidden ground, in the very same terms by which he addresses the man who has made the farthest and the largest incursions upon it. It is true, that he is only a little way upon the wrong side of the line of demarcation. But why is he upon it at all? It was in the act of crossing that line, and not in the act of going onwards after he had crossed it—it was then that the contest between right and wrong was entered upon, and then it was decided. That was the instant of time at which principle struck her surrender. The great pull which

the man had to make, was in the act of overleaping the fence of separation; and after that was done, justice had no other barrier by which to obstruct his progress over the whole extent of the field which she had interdicted. There might be barriers of a different description. . . . . There might, after the absolute limit between justice and injustice is broken, be another limit against the extending of a man's encroachments, in a terror of discovery, or in a sense of interest, or even in the relentings of a kindly or a compunctious feeling towards him who is the victim of injustice. But this is not the limit with which the question of a man's truth, or a man's honesty, has to do. These have already been given up. He may be only a little way within the margin of the unlawful territory, but still he is upon it, and the God who finds him there will reckon with him and deal with him accordingly. . . . . It is not by a gentle transition that a man steps over from honesty to dishonesty. There is between them a wall rising up to heaven; and the high authority of heaven must be stormed, ere one *inch* of entrance can be made into the region

of iniquity. . . . . It is at the precise limit between the right and the wrong, that the flaming sword of God's law is placed. It is there that 'Thus saith the Lord' presents itself, in legible characters, to our view. It is there where the operation of his commandment begins; and not at any of those higher gradations where a man's dishonesty first appals himself by the chance of its detection, or appals others by the mischief and insecurity which it brings upon social life."

With such a view of the criminality of fraud in the smallest transaction of life, the same eloquent writer proceeds to say, that in an act of dishonesty, "the littleness of the gain, so far from giving a littleness to the guilt, is in fact a circumstance of aggravation; for he who has committed injustice for the sake of a less advantage, has done it on the impulse of a less temptation; he has parted with his honesty at an inferior price. . . . . The very circumstance which gives to his character a milder transgression in the eyes of the world, makes it more odious in the judgment of the sanctuary. The more paltry it is in respect

of profit, the more profane it may be in respect of principle. . . . . They who count upon the smallness of their dishonest acts, *are just going in a small way to hell.*"

Let this one consideration keep you from the least act of dishonesty; it is an act of *guilt*—a violation of God's commandment—perilous to the soul. DEFRAUD NOT—is the law once uttered in spirit at Sinai, and reiterated by Christ. Defraud not—even to the value of a farthing. Do not indulge one covetous desire, lest it should tempt you to dishonesty. Keep ever a dark and fearful chasm between your soul and the least act of deception or fraud, the least injustice or unfaithfulness toward the property of another. Do not venture near such an act, Close and bar every avenue that would lead you to it;—extravagance in dress; vain amusements; vicious indulgences; promising adventures; the society, the principles, and the example of crafty men. Shun these things. Shun a dishonest action; aye, shun the very thought of dishonesty, as you would shun the pestilence. It is worse than pestilence. In that act are

involved the destruction of character; the loss of place and of confidence; public dishonor; perhaps a prison; remorse of conscience; the wrath of God; and everlasting misery. Whatever evil consequences ensue from a course of dishonesty, are involved in the first act of dishonesty. Settle it in your mind that every such act is a *crime*. Avoid it in the fear of God. The fear of God; a sense of moral obligation; the remembrance of that ever watchful eye; the anticipation of that day which shall search all hearts, and shall bring into judgment every secret thing—this, *this* is the only effectual safeguard against dishonesty amid the excitements and temptations of a great city. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word."

Possibly there is a young man here who has already been betrayed into petty acts of fraud, or who is even now laboring under a sore temptation. Oh, poor misguided youth, I beseech you to pause, consider, hear me; you are on the edge of a whirlpool where character and peace, and your eternal well-being will be wrecked. Break off at once from every thing

that tempts you to dishonesty. No longer jeopard character and soul for the gratification of a moment, or for gains that must corrode your very life.

Perhaps too, there is one here who is already far gone in that giddy whirl; who trembles as I speak, as though every eye was turned on him, and could read his guilt; who knows that the hour of discovery is at hand; that to-morrow may bring with it exposure and disgrace. Wretched young man! the victim of remorse and anguish that no tongue can utter! Is it yet possible to save you? There is but one way for you to be delivered from this state of torment. Go to him whom you have injured, confess all your wrong, and abide by the consequence, whatever it may be. Perhaps he will put you in prison. Be it so. Better that you should go to prison on your own confession, a sincere penitent, than to go there as you soon must—a detected criminal, under sentence also to the eternal prison of despair.

Perhaps he will have mercy on you; will give you a new trial; will help you in your attempt to reform. Then throw yourself upon

his generosity, and endeavor also to requite it. Pledge your time and your services to make restitution, and be henceforth a pattern of fidelity. Are the terms hard? They are indispensable, and it will be harder if you reject them. Nay, you must forsake all sin, and make your peace with God, if you would be saved from ruin here, and from eternal misery.

LECTURE II.

TEMPTATIONS TO INTEMPERANCE.

PROVERBS XXIII. 31 seq.—*Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.*

THIS picture of intemperance is drawn to the life. The effects of wine-bibbing were the same three thousand years ago as now; it made man the same silly, lustful, beastly creature. What language could portray more strikingly the evils of this habit?

"Who hath *wo?*"—who is in such anguish of mind, that he is crying out continually: 'Oh! oh! wo is me?' "Who hath sorrow?"—or more

strictly, who hath want, poverty, and wretchedness? "Who hath contentions?"—who is always getting into quarrels with those about him? "Who hath babbling?"—who is full of idle and complaining speeches? "Who hath wounds without cause?"—who is covered with wounds and bruises, which he has received not in his country's defence, nor in any honorable warfare, but in some low brawl; wounds and running sores that cover him with disgrace and not with glory? "Who hath redness and dullness of eyes?" To whom do all these reproachful characteristics pertain? To "those that tarry long at the wine"—that linger over their cups; and that "go to seek mixed wine"—who *prove*, by excessive drinking, wine mingled with intoxicating drugs. These are the characteristics of such as drink to excess; they have sorrow and want, strifes and complaints, bruises and abuse. Their incoherent murmurings, their quarrelsome disposition, and their bleared, glassy, blood-shot eyes, proclaim to all men the wretchedness of their condition.

Then follows the admonition: "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red;" red wine

being such a favorite with eastern nations that they even color their white wines with log-wood or saffron: "when it giveth his color in the cup"—when its eye or bead sparkles in the goblet; "when it moveth itself aright"—when it flows down smoothly—when it may be quaffed with a relish, when it smacks good, as is true of racy, soft wine.

"At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." However palatable it may be, this is the consequence of excessive wine-drinking: it is like swallowing scorpions; like taking a viper into the stomach, which shall fasten its fangs into the very vitals.

"Thine eyes shall behold strange women." Wine inflames lust; and the silly, besotted creature who is under its influence, may be betrayed, as Lot was, into unnatural and beastly crimes. The eyes that are inflamed with wine gloat upon prostitutes.

"And thine heart shall utter perverse things" —foolish, profane, deceitful, and indecent language.

"Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon

the top of a mast;" thy gait shall be unsteady, and thou shalt be continually falling into danger.

"They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not." The miserable inebriate has been kicked and beaten, and abused in his drunken brawls, perhaps by the very men who provided him with liquor; but in his stupid, senseless state, he felt no pain, and was not conscious of the injuries inflicted on him. But now he begins to discover his sorry plight, and to feel the smart of blows and wounds; and yet, instead of being overwhelmed with shame, and resolving never again to expose himself to such degradation, he cries out, as he tries to shake off his stupor: "When shall I awake, that I may seek it yet again;" and he crawls back to his cups, like a dog to his vomit—the bloated, blear-eyed, bruised, suppurating, filthy creature,—a man transformed into a beast by wine.

I am tempted to close my sermon at this point; for if you have received the full impression of this description of an inebriate from the pen of the inspired writer, any ar-

gument from me to dissuade you from intemperance would be not only superfluous but tame.

The admonition of the text is addressed to young men;—as it were, the tender counsel of a father to a son; and if every young man who hears me, would now come to the resolution never again to quaff the ruby wine; if, with one voice, the young men in this audience would abjure all intoxicating drinks, I should feel that I had for once accomplished the great end of preaching, in bringing the word of God to exert its proper influence upon my hearers.

But many, I presume, under various pretexts, will evade the force of this scriptural admonition. It is appropriate, they will say, to the drunkard; but we are not drunkards, nor are we in any danger of becoming such. This is the feeling of many young men, who nevertheless occasionally drink to excess. They never get drunk, for that is vulgar; though they do sometimes get "high;" they have no fear of falling into a habit of intemperance, for they despise it, and they drink only in company.

Now it is this very sense of security in this

matter, that so often betrays youth into danger and accelerates their ruin.

I remarked last Sabbath evening, that almost every vice is insidious and gradual in its approaches. It is so with intemperance. The habit steals on apace. Hence I should render you little service by denouncing intemperance in the gross; for your convictions would go with me heartily, and I should fight "as one that beateth the air." I must go into detail; must point out the avenues through which temptation will assail you, that you may be prepared to meet it at the very first assault.

On no subject have you more need of caution; for it is from the ranks of young men, that the ranks of inebriates, notwithstanding the fearful ravages of disease and death among them, are annually recruited. What, then, are the influences by which young men are betrayed into intemperance?

1. Some young men are led into intemperance by their *constitutional temperament.* The appetite for food and drink, the desire to gratify the palate, is strongly developed in children, and generally adheres to them through

the whole period of youth. But in some it is stronger than in others; possibly on account of a propensity inherited from their parents.

A youth of an ardent and excitable temperament, will be more easily seduced than others into a fondness for the exhilarating cup, when once he has tasted it. The sparkling wine suffuses his brain with a genial glow, and causes his whole frame to tingle with exquisite sensations. He loves the wild excitement that seizes him, after having swallowed with a peculiar relish "a julep," "a sling," "an egg-nog," or some other delectable compound, better known in the vocabulary of the bar-room than of the pulpit. He loves it; loves it from the first; it accords with his temperament, and he does not need to acquire a taste for it.

Such a young man is in peculiar danger. He should understand himself thoroughly, and should watch over himself strictly. He should know that he cannot trust himself amid such temptations.

Animals have instincts which prompt them to supply their wants, yet never lead them to excess in food and drink; but which rather in-

dicate when their wants are properly supplied. Man has appetites and passions which are not self-regulating, but which require the control of reason.

> "And reason raise o'er instinct as you can,
> In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis man."

God regulates the appetites of the brute, by the very nature which He has given him. But man is placed under the responsibility of governing himself, and should therefore understand and control his appetites. Let every young man of strong natural propensities toward sensual indulgence, remember that responsibility.

2. *An evil example at home* often leads young men into intemperance. The time has gone by when the wine-bottle or the decanter was seen upon every side-board, and upon every dinner-table. Happily the youth of the present generation, are to a great extent delivered from the power of a custom once so general and so pernicious.

Yet that custom lingers in what is called fashionable society. Wine is still, in many houses, an article in daily use, and indispensa-

ble at an evening entertainment. To refuse it, is regarded as a breach of politeness; not to provide it, as a lack of hospitality. A youth trained under such influences, rarely grows up to manhood without falling more than once into inebriety. In fact, no inconsiderable proportion of the young men in a great city who fall into habits of dissipation, and of at least occasional intemperance, are the sons of men of wealth, who have every facility for gratifying an appetite which has been nurtured at home, and the indulgence of which is thought to belong to young men of fashion and of fortune.

Such youth are greatly to be pitied. When a young man first falls under the power of this vice, there is some hope of reclaiming him, if a father's counsels, a mother's entreaties, a sister's tears, with their united consistent example, combine to save him; but where these domestic influences are all associated with the wine-cup, what wonder if that cup becomes to him the very cup of devils. His parents drink moderately and politely at home; he acquires a fondness for wine at his father's

table, which he indulges elsewhere with his young companions, till it grows into a habit of intemperance.

"Wo to him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him and makest him drunken also." What wo, when the tempter is a father, destroying his own son!

A gentleman of standing in a town of New England, continued to have his table daily furnished with wine, although his sons were notoriously intemperate, and one of them had become so dissolute that he had forbidden him the house. That son, after having lived for some time away from home, was prevailed upon to abandon his intemperate habits, and became a sober and respectable man. In these circumstances, on the occasion of a family gathering, he made a visit to the home which he had left in disgrace. At dinner, as usual, wine was on the table. His father offered him a glass, but he refused it; his father pressed him to take it, telling him that there was no harm in drinking a glass of wine; laughed at his scruples, and insisted upon his making merry at a family dinner. The temptation proved

too strong for one who had just been reclaimed. He took the glass; he drank the wine; his appetite awoke; his soul was set on fire of hell; and he plunged with fearful rapidity into a drunkard's wretchedness, a drunkard's grave, and a drunkard's doom.

Pitiable is the future of that young man, though he be heir to an immense estate, who receives poison at his father's table in a silver cup—who lays his unsuspecting head upon the bosom of domestic love, and finds that bosom a nest of adders. If there is a youth here to-night, who is surrounded at home with such temptations, to whom wine-drinking is sanctioned by the venerated example of a father, and the quiet, tender and enduring example of a mother, both respectable and respected; I say to such a youth, not intending to cast dishonor upon his parents, who are unconsciously leading him on to ruin, you are in most imminent danger; save yourself—*save* yourself, if you can; and may God have pity upon you.

3. *The social habits and feelings* of young men often betray them into intemperance.

Young men generally are fond of society, and they are easily influenced by others. Hence the frequent warning given to the young in the book of Proverbs, against evil companions. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

A young man of a generous disposition, and of jovial feelings, is very apt to be led into a free use of wine and other intoxicating drinks. He goes out upon a party of pleasure, or he wishes to pass a social evening with friends at his own room. To make himself agreeable and popular, or simply under the impulse of his native liveliness and generosity, he provides an entertainment in which liquors are a chief item. The bottle circulates freely, and amid the fumes of tobacco and of wine, with abundance of jokes, laughter, and uproarious singing, time flies merrily away.

Such a clever fellow is at no loss for friends or for invitations to like entertainments; and before he is aware, he is led into an irregular, dissipated mode of life, and has become dependent upon the excitement of a wine-supper for much of his enjoyment. His free and easy

disposition becomes his snare, and he falls a victim to his own good-nature and love of hilarity. To this species of carousing, smoking is an indispensable auxiliary; sometimes, it gives the preliminary stimulus.

I have traced the operation of this social principle in college. A college is a world within itself; not only a literary world, but a social world, having its grades and fashions, its cliques and coteries. There exist in almost every college a multitude of secret societies. These are formed ostensibly for literary purposes, though their precise object is often veiled in mystery. Sometimes they are truly useful, combining a pleasant relaxation from severe study, with varied intellectual entertainment. But the common course of such societies is this. A constitution is formed, prescribing certain literary exercises. These at first awaken interest, and render the meetings pleasant and profitable. But by and by that interest flags;—there is a failure in the appointments, and recourse must be had to the social element to keep up an attendance. But what sociability can there be among young

men, where there is nothing to eat or drink? Cigars are brought in—then light refreshments—due regard being had to moderation and economy—then one and another sends for wine, and in face of the constitution and of all good resolutions, the meeting degenerates into a mere carousal, from which some of the first scholars are carried to their rooms at midnight dead drunk. Intemperance among young men in college, is owing almost entirely to this *social* use of *wine.*

I suppose that this description of a secret society in college, will answer for many a club or association, military company or fire company, in this city. The social feeling, in itself so commendable, betrays young men into practices that are dangerous, and often fatal. Upon public festivals, intemperance in drinking is regarded by many as the most fit expression of hilarity. The Rabbins have a saying, that at the feast of Purim, every true Israelite should drink wine till he can no longer discriminate between the exclamations "Cursed be Haman," and "Blessed be Mordecai."

The tendency to a dissipated course of life

growing out of the social feeling, is increased by the usages of fashionable society. A young man who, in the company of his own sex, has been betrayed into a state of intoxication, and who perhaps is stung with mortification by the circumstance, and is ready to abjure the instrument of his degradation, finds in the social circles to which he is introduced, that so far from its being considered disreputable to drink wine freely, it is the custom to drink it whenever invited, and that ladies even do not decline it, though, in conformity with etiquette, they may withdraw from the table before the drinking becomes excessive. Occasionally the tempting glass is offered by a lady, or set before the guest on his New-Year's call. A temptation in this form, addressed to the social principle, is the hardest to be resisted.

Ye daughters of Eve, doth it not suffice you that your first mother tempted the common father of us all, and so brought sin and death into the world, with all our wo? Will ye still lend an ear to the serpent that beguiled her? will ye still drink in his poison, and then proffer it to those who know not how to refuse

you? Can ye lend yourselves to such a master for such a work, to beguile men with temptations which ye have sweetened and adorned?

Will ye not rather retrieve the dishonor of that first temptation; and win back again to purity and holiness the race which was betrayed by woman into transgression? I cannot think of a young woman presenting to a young man the cup of intoxication, with smiles and honeyed words, without being reminded of that first temptation in Eden, nor without sorrowing that he who has been a liar and a murderer from the beginning, should still find such agents in the work of ruin.

When shall man, degraded by intemperance, no longer be suffered to palliate his guilt before his Maker, by the plea, "the woman whom thou gavest to be with me," to be my companion and my solace, she gave me of the poison and I did drink. When shall woman charm only to save, and never to destroy?

But I must not forget that I am preaching to *young men.*

4. In connection, rather than in contrast,

with the last named temptation, is that arising from *a sense of loneliness.* This feeling is very common with young men on first coming to the city. A young man obtains a situation as an under-clerk, or as an apprentice, with little or no salary for the first year. The best accommodations which he can afford, are a cheerless room in the attic of a large boarding-house, and the solitary though it may be the crowded table, of an eating-house. When winter comes, a fire in his room is out of the question; nor can he at any time entertain himself with books longer than till his two-penny lamp is exhausted. If there be much company, and especially families in the house, he feels that he is an intruder in the parlor; the house of his employer is closed against him; and he has no friends and no home. He saunters out in quest of something to divert his mind, and to while away the time. There is no free reading room, nor lecture, to which he can resort; and he does not wish for mere amusement, neither can he afford it. Walking along Broadway, he passes a saloon (a word of ambiguous meaning) gaily lighted

up and occupied with young men enjoying their cigars, and reading the news. It looks cheerful and inviting; he passes and repasses, and at length ventures in: he sits down embarrassed, and takes up a paper; but while seeming to run his eye over it, he is stealing a glance about the room, and endeavoring to make himself easy in his new position. A most comfortable place truly! where he can spend many a vacant evening. He feels, however, that it is hardly honorable to enjoy the comforts, or to him the luxuries of the establishment, without doing something for its support. The bar is at hand; but it offers nothing but cigars and liquors, and he has no wish for either. He would rather be thought mean than fall into evil habits, and he leaves the place as frugal as he entered it.

The next evening brings the same dread feeling of loneliness, and he cannot resist the temptation to seek again his new quarters. This soon becomes his habit; but that bar must be patronized in some way, or he cannot feel entitled to the privileges of the room. Gradually he forms acquaintances; and from

visiting the place merely to while away time, or to gather up the news, he resorts there for the sake of company and good feeling, and thus is led along till he comes to love his wine and his cigar quite as often as he can afford them. Thus is begun with many a youth a course of dissipation. He has good *habits*, in which he was trained from childhood, but his *principles* are untried, and he falls under temptation, because there was none to take him by the hand to relieve his loneliness and to supply the place of *home*. Yet that young man is not without blame in the matter. In fellowship with a church, in meetings for social worship, in the society of the pure-minded and the good, to which he would thus be introduced, in the cultivation of music, for which there are many facilities, and even in his own scanty library, he might have found enough to meet his wants, had he but possessed true decision of character, fortitude under discouragements, and a hearty love of right.

I know of no real safeguard for the youthful stranger in a great city, but sincere, humble and earnest piety.

5. But in speaking of the modes in which young men are betrayed into intemperance, I must not omit to mention *the enticements of evil and designing men.* Not only is the place of temptation decorated with every thing attractive, with pictures, mirrors, and various ornamental devices, not only are pieces of statuary, antiques, models, and other curiosities studiously arranged to catch the passer by, not only is the bar stocked with the choicest liquors and tended by an accomplished steward—perhaps by a female whose misfortune it is to possess more beauty than modesty—not only are the voluptuous swell of music, the intoxicating whirl of the waltz, and the excitement of cards or dice introduced, as adjuncts to the natural stimulus of youthful passions, but in some instances decoys are used—men of pleasure, with polished address, but with hearts of fiends, who with all the arts of persuasion, bring young men within that circle where Circe still practices her enchantments, and transforms her fascinated unresisting victims into brutes. Young men of wealth are surrounded with such parasites.

Our city swarms with these corrupters of youth—who are accomplished in the various arts of destruction, and who find their pleasure and their reward in initiating the young heart into all the mysteries of vice.

The whole community is shocked by the announcement, that in the heart of the city a man is bitten by a rattlesnake; a reptile so dangerous must be instantly destroyed. And yet, in sight of the dread catastrophe, there may be scorpions and adders bottled up, not for safe keeping, but to have their venom sharpened by confinement, and then to be let loose openly upon unthinking youth, hissing with the fiery tongue of the serpent that never dies. And there are "caitiff wretches," who like the apothecary at Mantua, only for a much more paltry sum, in spite of every law of God and man, will sell the poison to every maddened youth that calls for it.

Oh that young men would remember, that he cannot be a friend who would entice them to sin! Oh that they would shun these halls of gilded vice, as the gateways of hell: that they would look beyond the crimson drapery,

the marble floor, the painted ceiling, the decorated windows, to the want, and wretchedness, and everlasting wo, to which all this is but the portal.*

I have now specified some of the modes in which young men are betrayed into intemperance. The enumeration is of course incomplete. But when a subject covers so wide a range, instead of attempting to grasp the whole in one view, it is better to take up a few particulars, which may serve as illustrations of the rest, and to exhibit these so fully as to set the mind upon tracing out others, so that it may acquire the habit of constant watchfulness.

For the same reason, I shall not occupy

* A gentleman from the country, once visited a medical college in one of our principal cities. On going into the anatomical chamber, he recognized with horror the body of an old friend, which had been brought there for dissection. That friend had once rescued him from habits of dissipation; but when he himself not only reformed but became a Christian, his friend, content with his own morality, had gradually forsaken him; had removed to the city, where he in turn had fallen into dissipation, and where he had died, a miserable drunkard, unfit for decent burial.

your attention with the evils of intemperance. These you know already: and you do not so much need to be warned against intemperance, as against the various influences within and around you, which imperceptibly lead to intemperance.

Drunkenness you abhor:—but you may not understand, and therefore you do not shun, all the influences that would betray even you into this loathsome vice. I might warn you against the habit of intemperance, as injurious to the health, the character, and the business prospects of a young man; as wasteful of time and money; as leading to other vices and crimes; and as finally destructive to the soul. But all this you know. You are in little danger of deliberately becoming drunkards. But you need to be warned against the insidious approaches of this habit, and not only warned, but *fortified.*

There is, however, one point in this connection, which I cannot dismiss without bringing it more distinctly to your consideration: it is the *sinfulness* of intemperance.

As it is the fashion of our times to cast

blame upon society, and circumstances, and tempters, and temptations, rather than upon the criminal, there is not in general that deep and alarming conviction of the criminality of intemperance, which the Bible aims to produce.

We hear too much of intemperance as a misfortune, too little of intemperance as a crime. Among young men especially, the criminality of intemperance is covered up, like the guilt of dishonesty, under various softening epithets. When a young man becomes intoxicated, literally and grossly drunk, he is spoken of as being "high;" he is "over the bay;" he has "spreed it too hard;" he is "under the weather;" or "a little how come you so;"—whereas he is *drunk;* as really drunk, as any miserable, ragged loafer in the pot-house or the kennel. *Drunk* is the word; and drunkenness is itself a crime, and is the *parent* of crime.

But this crime, more even than other crimes, has been divested of its loathsomeness by the glosses of the poet and the novelist. The wine cup has been wreathed with flowers, and praises hymned to Bacchus. The German student sings the virtues of his Crambambuli, as he drinks himself drunk.

To get drunk, is regarded as an innocent infirmity—perhaps as a fit subject for merriment. It is, as I have said, with young men especially, a *social* sin; into which one falls good-naturedly, and often unawares. Therefore they do not judge it so severely as the crime of stealing, and many other crimes. But what higher crime can a man be guilty of than this very crime of intemperance? What a crime does a man commit against himself, in getting drunk; against the delicate mechanism of his own body, against that reason and conscience which God gave him to be his light and guide, but which he has enslaved to appetite! What a crime does he commit against the property which a kind Providence has bestowed upon him for necessary and useful purposes, but which he consumes upon his lusts! What a crime against the family and the friends whom he robs of himself, and whom he plunges into anguish and reproach! What a crime against society, which he defrauds of his own industry and talents, and which he would degrade into a community of beasts, foul with every indecency! And what a

crime against the God who made him in His own image, and against the Savior who died to redeem him! "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." His place shall be with thieves, and the covetous, with revilers and extortioners, with fornicators, idolaters, liars, and adulterers—with the filth and the offscouring of the universe, in "the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever and ever."

Permit me now, in a few words, to counsel you as to the best security against intemperance. It is the principle of *total abstinence from all that can intoxicate.* I am aware that some good men would not go with me in this advice; for good men have honest differences of opinion as to the best mode of suppressing intemperance. But I give you my advice deliberately; after hearing my reasons for it, you can take other counsel if you will. My wish is to give you an infallible security against intemperance. "*Look* not upon the wine when it is red;" do not even suffer your eyes to feast upon it, much less your lips to taste it. "Look not upon the *wine,*" though it sparkles before you in its richest color and tone.

For one who has already any degree of fondness for intoxicating drinks, and who has fallen into occasional inebriety, the rule of total abstinence is *the only safeguard and the only hope.* This is the unanimous testimony of the thousands and tens of thousands who have been recovered of late years from a life of drunkenness. A single glass of intoxicating drink would probably be the ruin of any one of them. This we know also from the law of habit, and from the very nature of man. Every man feels secure against the temptations that have ruined others, till he also falls under their power. That self-sufficiency is his destruction. If you are already a lover of strong drink—if you relish the excitement of it, and feel that you cannot dispense with it—there is little hope of saving you from habitual intemperance, unless you will come at once upon the ground of total abstinence. If you will not, I verily fear you are a lost man; your chances of escape are like those of a man on a ship foundering at sea.

For those who have never yet been overcome by strong drink, and who have no hankering after the bottle, the principle of total ab-

stinence is certainly a safe one. The habit of intemperance is gradually formed; and many a man who has boasted that he could resist that habit, has at length become its victim. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, TAKE HEED lest he fall." *Take care!* TAKE CARE!!

I admit that you may continue through life to indulge yourself in an occasional glass of wine, without ever falling into the excessive use of it; but on the other hand, you must admit the possibility of thus acquiring a fondness for intoxicating drinks, which may be highly dangerous, if not fatal. The principle which I recommend has the merit of being *absolutely safe*. Besides, upon this principle, the question of drinking is settled once for all; and it costs you less perplexity and less self-denial than to agitate that question with every new temptation.

And lastly; in those, if such there be, who are in no danger of becoming intemperate, the principle of total abstinence from that which is so destructive to others, as a means of saving them, is benevolent and magnanimous. In fact, I know not where to look for a nobler exemplification of the spirit of Christ, than that

which is furnished by Paul upon this very subject, in Romans xiv. 14, seq.:

"I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself;" Christ has taught me, through his Spirit, that under the Gospel dispensation the ceremonial distinctions between clean and unclean meats are no longer to be regarded; those distinctions were not founded in nature, but in the peculiarity of the Mosaic economy. Christians are at liberty to partake of any sort of animal food, even of swine's flesh; nevertheless, "to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean;" whoever has conscientious scruples about eating certain kinds of meat, should of course abstain from them; for unless he is fully satisfied that the ceremonial law is no longer binding, it would be morally wrong for him to eat any thing that is forbidden by that law.

And the conscience of such a man is to be respected. "If thy brother be grieved with thy meat"—if he is pained at seeing thee do what he regards as wrong, and if knowing this thou wilt persist in doing it, "now walkest thou

not *charitably*,"—for it would be a small matter for thee to give up such an indulgence for the sake of a brother. To persist in gratifying thine own appetite, even in a manner lawful in itself, when by so doing thou art wilfully grieving the conscience of another, is narrow-minded and selfish. Besides, thy example, in a thing which to thee is innocent and safe, may lead thy weak brother to violate his conscience and so to commit sin. "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died."

"Let not then your good be evil spoken of;" do not adhere to an abstract principle, or a technical distinction, nor to a course of conduct in non-essential things, which is innocuous in itself, when you have reason to believe that your position will be misunderstood, and that your example will become the occasion of injury and of ruin to others. "For meat destroy not the work of God." For a selfish gratification, especially for the mere gratification of appetite, do not run the risk of destroying others. What sort of a Christian is he who will not give up a mere luxury, when, by so doing, he can promote the welfare of his fel-

low-men; when, by refusing so to do, he knows that he may become the occasion of perdition to the souls of others?

"All things indeed are pure:" it is allowable under the Christian dispensation to eat all kinds of animal food; "every creature of God is good;" "but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence," so as to mislead others and to betray them into sin. "All articles of food are in themselves innocent, but it is wrong in any man so to use them as to give offence." * "Wo to that man by whom the offence—the scandal—the reproach—the occasion of falling—cometh." That man is guilty before God. "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

It is sometimes said, that in laying down the precept of total abstinence, we go beyond the teachings and the example of Christ. Not unless Paul, who was inspired by the Holy Spirit, went beyond his Master; for he gives us here a reason why "it is good not to drink *wine*,"

* Hodge.

and that reason is simply that others may be injured by our example.

But did not Christ himself make wine at Cana in Galilee? Certainly; and I have no doubt it was wine on which men could become intoxicated, though there is no proof that the company then present did become intoxicated; and it is evident that the ruler of the feast had not lost his taste. But what then? Did Jesus make the wine in order that the guests might have the means of getting drunk? Was *making wine* the chief object He had in view; or was it *to show forth His divine power*, by a miracle, which on that occasion would be most pertinent and striking. There was no sick man present to be healed; no blind man to be restored to sight; no dead man to be raised; and Jesus did that which would be most apt to come to the notice of the company, and to excite their wonder. It was not at all in His mind, to settle the wine question for all coming generations. The turning of water into wine, therefore, is to be accounted for on the same general principles as the existence of intoxicating materials in nature. The Creator of all

merely did by a direct act, what He has elsewhere accomplished by the law of fermentation, and by other indirect processes.

I do not hold that it is a sin in itself to drink wine; neither do I think it a sin *not* to drink it. I have no qualms of conscience, and no apprehensions of future regret; for not having drank a glass of wine these fifteen years, I have no reason to suppose that I have dishonored religion by such abstinence. And I am resolved that no child of mine, if God shall ever bring upon me the awful visitation of a drinking son—and what father does not tremble for the fate of his sons in this city?—no degenerate child of mine shall ever be able to quote a single act of mine to countenance his infamy; and that no child of my neighbor, no young man who shall go reeling home from a wedding, shall have it to say, that he saw me drink wine there after the notable example at Cana.

I am persuaded that for me at least, it is good in these days not to drink wine. Is it then good for you, young men, to drink it? "Wine is a mocker; strong drink is raging. Be not

amongst wine-bibbers. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Oh young men! the strength, the hope, the glory of the land! My soul goes out to you with unutterable desire. Give not, I pray you, give not yourselves over to the destroyer. Heed not the delusive philosophy of the epicure—"let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;" for remember, that against that to-morrow, God is preparing for such, a cup which they must drink, though it shall deluge their souls with fire: "*the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation.*"

LECTURE III.

TEMPTATIONS TO GAMBLING.

PROVERBS IV. 14, 15, 16.—*Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.*

IT is an interesting fact, that almost an entire book of the Scriptures is devoted to the instruction of young men. And there is no "Young man's book," no collection of the maxims of Chesterfield or of Franklin, no volume of discourses to young men, to be compared to the book of Proverbs; none so true to nature, none so marked with wisdom from above. It is a plain, practical manual of life, which every young man should carry with him, and even, if possible, should commit to memory. This book frequently cautions the young against evil and designing men. Such men there are in every community; men who lie in wait to

destroy the character, the prospects, and the souls of young men; who cannot sleep except they have done mischief; whose eyes will not close in slumber unless they have caused some to fall into their snare. Against such the emphatic warning is given, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

There is one device of evil men to which this caution is strikingly appropriate. I refer to GAMBLING.

Of the extent of this practice in a great city; of the system with which it is conducted; of the fascination which it exerts over the young; of the multitudes that are ensnared and ruined by it; of the thousands and tens of thousands of dollars that are nightly staked upon the shuffling of cards or the throw of dice; of the fraud, and forgery, and theft, and suicide, and murder, to which gambling so frequently leads; of all this, the moral, industrious, and virtuous portion of the community have no adequate conception.

You will probably set down as extravagant

the remark of the celebrated Montesquieu, "If Europe is to be ruined, it will be ruined by gaming." But leaving out of view the wasteful and demoralizing influences of this habit upon the upper classes of society, especially upon women of rank and fortune, who are often so captivated by the game as to pawn their jewels, their plate, their linen, and their apparel, and to abuse the credit of their husbands, in order to procure the means of gratifying this insatiable passion; leaving out of view also, the innumerable bankruptcies that may be attributed mainly to this same cause, and the wasteful, spendthrift habits that it engenders in the heirs of great estates, plunging them into embarrassment and ruin; let us hear the testimony of a treasurer of the poor-rates in London, as to the effect of one single species of gambling, upon the *poorer* classes in that metropolis. "If," he says, "I might give my opinion of the ill effects of the *lottery*, of the influence it has in corrupting the people,—and if I might form that opinion from the appearance in Spital-fields, I should be led to conclude, that there is no circumstance which

conduces so much as the lottery to make the lower order of the people *bad husbands, bad wives, bad children, and bad servants.* I know of no one thing which has been productive of so many evils and so many suicides as the lottery."*

This evidence, originally given before a committee of the House of Commons, is corroborated by the reports of similar legislative committees in our own country, which have from time to time investigated the evils of lotteries. But this is only one mode of gambling; and it has been suppressed by legislative enactments in several of our States. Other branches of the pernicious system are still in successful operation. All classes of the community are involved in it; the fashionable and the vulgar; the rich and the poor; the respectable and the vile; the statesman and the criminal. It is practiced not only in cities, but in almost every country village, in steamboats and hotels, by day and by night; it is one of the most crying evils in our new settlements. Gambling

* Committee of the House of Commons, 1808.

is not only the occasional diversion, but the constant occupation of many travelers upon our western lakes and rivers. It is an evil of such magnitude and extent as to call for animadversion from the pulpit.

Gambling is the act or practice of gaming for money. Gaming is not necessarily gambling. Persons sometimes play at cards, dice, billiards, and the like, for mere amusement; though this is often reprehensible in view of its influence upon others. Sometimes a merely nominal prize or stake is set up to give zest to the play. But in gambling, *money* or its equivalent is always hazarded upon the issue of the game. In common acceptation, however, the term is applied to all operations in which property of any description is put up to be gained or lost by mere hazard, without an equivalent, in useful skill or labor, for the gain on the one hand, or in the prospect of success, for the risk on the other. I make these distinctions, because I do not wish to indulge in an indiscriminate tirade against gaming.

With these preliminary observations, I now

propose to consider some of the influences which seduce the young men of our city into the practice of gambling, and then to exhibit some of the evil effects of this vice.

1. And first I remark, that it is true of gambling as of intemperance, that *some are predisposed to it by constitutional temperament.* In fact, there are certain elements in human nature from which the practice of gambling springs, and in which it has its strong-hold. Man loves excitement. The mind is susceptible of strong emotions, and often luxuriates in their very intensity. God has provided abundantly for this constituent element of our being, in the world of nature, in the family and the social state, and pre-eminently in those intellectual and moral subjects which are of such thrilling and transcendent interest, in connection with his own character and works and government.

But united as the mind of man is with a body of limited powers of endurance, there is a limit to its own healthful excitement. That limit each individual must learn with respect to himself from experience; and he cannot

transcend it with impunity. It is in part prescribed by our ever-varying circumstances. The physical system has often proved inadequate to sustain the intense and prolonged excitement of the mind upon a subject which has engrossed all its powers of thought and of feeling. Even when divine truth is the object of contemplation, and the excitement is pure and elevating, the body will sometimes sink under it; the over-wrought brain will move sluggishly, and the nervous system will be prostrated for days afterward.

But in some individuals this excitability is more marked naturally than in others. Some, too, indulge it, until excitement becomes the one element of their being. They cannot live unless they are in a fever. They have a passion for the novel and the thrilling, and they feed the flame by stimulants. Hence the almost universal market among all nations, barbarous or civilized, for intoxicating drinks and drugs; hence the popularity among certain classes, of adventurous feats, of scenes illustrating strifes and perils and "hair-breadth 'scapes;" hence even barbarous diversions and

spectacles of cruelty have been favorites with nations calling themselves civilized and Christian; hence the demand for novels of the most exciting character, and for plays by which the fiercest passions are inflamed; and hence, too, the eagerness with which thousands rush to the field of battle, and revel in the license of the camp.

Now it is to this class of feelings that the practice of gambling appeals. It excites the youthful mind more strongly, perhaps, than any other mode of dissipation. The game is one continuous whirl of excitement; its changing features, its uncertain issue, keep the mind and often the body in a raging fever. Hope and fear, exultation and grief, rising or sinking in turn, hold the inexperienced player in an agony of suspense. Now his whole soul thrills with the prospect of gain; and now the heart almost stops beating, and the very breath is stifled, and a cold sweat gathers on the brow, as loss appears inevitable. Thus many of the strongest passions of our nature are brought into play through the excitement of the game.

I say, therefore, to every young man with

respect to this temptation, "know thyself;" know thy weakness; *guard* thyself; keep aloof from the card table and the billiard room, lest thy soul should be set on fire of hell, and thy virtue should be in one night consumed. "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." Trust not thyself where thou wilt be weak even against thyself; where passions will be stirred within thee that thou knowest not of; and reason, and conscience, and principle and virtue, shall be drowned in the giddy vortex that shall yawn within thine own maddened soul.

There are some who have a strange propensity to trust to *luck* for every thing—to rely not upon industrious effort, but upon the fickle smiles of fortune. Such persons are early led into the practice of gambling.

2. The fact that *gambling in stocks and in fictitious property* is countenanced by men of standing in the business community, and is with many a fruitful source of gain, presents a powerful temptation to young men to resort to the gaming table for the supply of their own

pockets. I have said that the term gambling is applied to those operations in which property is put up to be won or lost by mere hazard; where no useful skill or labor is bestowed, and no fair equivalent is rendered, to justify the gain or to compensate for the loss. There are many operations in the stock market, and in what is conveniently termed speculation, which fall within this definition of gambling.

There is of course a legitimate and honorable business in stocks, a business having its profits and losses, like every other branch of trade: but there is also a business in what are called "fancy" stocks—stocks which have a merely fictitious and conventional value—a value which is not based upon the known and tangible interests which they represent, as for instance upon the receipts of a railroad, or the dividends of a bank, but altogether upon an agreement among those who, for the time being, control the market. Dealing in such stocks is a mere game; a game in which all are successful, but the man in whose hands the card or ball is left when the play is suddenly broken off.

The broker engages to buy or to sell on such a day, so many shares of a certain stock at such a valuation. Of course it is his interest meanwhile, by craft, by trickery, by monopolizing the market, by agitation or panic, as the case may be, to bring that stock to his own price, and thus insure his profit. Or it may be that he himself is the victim of a combination on the part of others envious of his prosperity, to run him down. And thus, that which has but little if any real value, is made the basis of transactions involving thousands and tens of thousands of dollars, in games of chance and cheating. Sometimes a bank is started for the sole purpose of swindling the community, a faro-bank on a large scale, the proprietor of which is sure to win from all who hazard the least interest in it. After the game has been played long enough to awaken suspicion, or perhaps to *lull* inquiry, the high-sounding institution explodes, and vanishes like "the baseless fabric of a vision." The gold and silver in its vaults are no more tangible than sunbeams or moonshine bottled up; while its notes are as worthless as leaves scraped together in

autumn. The same thing is often done in speculations in land, in mines, and in other kinds of property.

Such transactions are reprobated by honorable business men; the press in part condemns them, and the law complains. Yet after all, the conspirators escape with their plunder, they grow rich, and their iniquity is forgotten in the splendor of their style and entertainments. Young men look on with envious eyes, and spurn honest labor for skill in financiering, as a means of acquiring wealth.

One such operation carried through successfully, the sight of one man, or company of men, living in luxury upon the fruits of such wholesale fraud, the knowledge of the fact that such doings can go unpunished, does more to lower the tone of public morals, than a thousand sentences for petty larceny or fraud can do to inspire a salutary dread of dishonesty. The community that suffers such things with impunity, that permits business young men to grow up in such a tainted atmosphere, and under such debasing examples, must expect to see them becoming corrupt, fraudulent,

and vicious; and must bear no small part of the responsibility for their moral ruin.

3. *The practice of betting upon elections,* so general in our country, tends to familiarize the minds of youth with the arts of gambling, and to invest those arts with an air of respectability which increases their danger. Politics in this country are the national game. The names of politicians are thrown into a convention as into a lottery, and after the most careful calculation of chances, and no little chicanery, one is drawn out for each office, to be cast with its rival into the great ballot-box of the people. Pending the election, bets are freely offered upon the candidates, just as upon Boston and Fashion at a race. Those who can have no personal interest at stake, devise an interest in this mode. The game is conducted as the lottery system formerly was in England. The tickets in the main lottery, when the prizes were large, were sold at too high a rate for persons of small means. Accordingly sub-lotteries were instituted, called assurances, the plan of which was to receive a small sum, for which a larger was to be returned, if any given

number in the main lottery should be drawn a prize or blank, the price of assurance always advancing as the drawing proceeded, and the excitement increased. "Besides these miniature lotteries with shilling tickets, there were tickets, issued by publishers of ladies' pocket books, by bakers, penny-barbers, &c. &c., promising definite sums to their customers, if certain numbers should turn out to be considerable prizes in the lottery."

Just so it is in our Presidential campaigns. The great prize lies open to but few; the multitude who cannot aspire to it, not content calmly to abide the issue, make the probable success of this or that candidate the subject of bantering and betting to the gross sum of many thousand dollars. This mode of speculating upon the probabilities of an election is almost universal. You cannot introduce the subject of politics at a hotel, on a steamboat, in a stage coach, or a railroad car, hardly in fact in any circle, without being challenged to back up your opinion by a bet. Should you quietly affirm in any such public place, that in your judgment this or that individual would be the

nominee of either national convention, or the next President of the United States, your neighbor would probably turn to you, and say, —"What will you bet on that, sir?" even before your lips were closed. All classes and all ages in the community have this pernicious habit. In my school-boy days, the juvenile partisans of Jackson and of Adams, the moment school was out, would endeavor to drown each other with their hurrahs, and would decide the destiny of the nation by a game of marbles, or by pitching coppers. With such an atmosphere around them, with this national habit of betting associated with the great interests of the nation, it is not surprising that young men should acquire a fondness for games of chance, or should be trained for systematic gambling.

The practice of betting is undignified and useless. How little value must he attach to his own opinion or his word, who is always volunteering to "back up" his assertions with a bet; and how little respect does he manifest for the word or for the opinion of another, who is always ready to challenge it in the same manner! How undesirable would be that

state of society in which opinions could be exchanged only upon such terms, and the value of each man's ideas should be estimated by the amount of money which he was willing to stake upon their accuracy! Aside from the exacerbation which it produces, and the dishonest practices to which it leads, betting tends to destroy all mutual confidence and respect between the parties.

Playing at games of chance for mere amusement, though it is practiced in families of the highest respectability, is often a dangerous recreation for the young. There are occasions when his entire ignorance of cards and other games alone restrains a young man from gaming for money;—when familiarity with the game, and especially the countenance of parents and respected seniors at home, would have led him to venture upon it to his own destruction.

4. Another quarter from which this temptation assails young men, is through the public and legal sanction which has been and in some States still is given to *lotteries*. The lottery system dates from a high antiquity. It has

received the sanction of government, and even in some instances of religion. It has been resorted to as a source of revenue to the states. In France it has sometimes yielded for this purpose twelve millions of francs per annum. Loans have been raised by the same means in Austria, Prussia, and most of the German states, in great Britain, and in several States of the Union. The early settlement of Virginia was assisted by lottery to the extent of £29,000.

Public works, colleges, charitable institutions, and even churches have been aided from this source. Thus the lottery system long enjoyed a kind of *prestige* which raised it above the grade of ordinary gambling, and which did not even suffer the term gambling to be applied to it. Of late years, however, the ruinous effects of the system upon public morals have been so palpable, that it is now prohibited by legislative enactments almost to the extent to which it was formerly fostered. Still it is very generally conducted in secret, and is defended by former usage, and by many specious arguments. It is one of the most seductive forms of gambling; and as it may be carried on with

secrecy, and without a loss of respectability, it is perhaps a favorite method with young men of gratifying a passion for games of chance. Lottery tickets can be procured in this city without difficulty, in spite of the law.

It may be well to pause here for a moment, to discuss the actual immorality of a system, which has been made tributary to government, to science and to religion, and which has diffused itself among all nations and into every ramification of society.

In so doing, I shall follow the able argument of a distinguished citizen of Boston,* who has given this subject his close attention. "In what," he asks, "consists the difference, whether my luck be determined by the toss of a penny, the cast of a die, or by a wheel of fortune? Men publicly agree to throw in certain sums of money, and then to determine by pieces of paper called *tickets*, who shall be winners. And so they also do, privately, at an ale-house, and decide their luck by cards or dice. Which is the more criminal?

* George W. Gordon, Esq.

"We have in lotteries all the constituents of gaming: the transferring of property from one to another, without receiving an equivalent: the exciting of an unnatural thirst for gain: and the placing of property at the disposition of hazard. For in no case, actual or supposed, can it be more completely subjected to the control of chance than in the lottery wheel. It matters not whether all the parties interested in the hazard, are actively engaged in bringing about the result. Are the gamesters upon the turf, less interested for not riding their own horses? Every ticket-holder is a partner in the lottery game, and the managers are his deputed agents to play it."*

The writer then proceeds to show the difference between lotteries and insurances, which are also to some extent matters of chance. "Policies of assurance are intended to guard against loss, or to prevent distress, by diffusing a loss among many persons; while lotteries are matters of chance, intended to allure to loss, by fallacious hopes of gain. Policies of

* Lecture on Lotteries, p. 12.

assurance hold out no allurements of gain. No man can enrich himself by lawful assurance. Neither can one man be impoverished by the assurance of another; but on the other hand insurance furnishes protection against poverty.

"In the collection and distribution of money, lotteries and assurances are totally unlike. In the one case, the money is collected from the many to be given to the few, without any regard to circumstances, or to the merit of those who receive it. While in the other case, it is collected from those who have property at risk, and who are, perhaps, unable to take the hazard of its safety, and is distributed to those who are so *unfortunate* as to be the losers.

"The premiums gained by an assurance company, are a reward in consideration of the capital employed, and placed at risk, for the benefit of those who take out policies. While in the lottery, there is no capital whatever employed; not a farthing is deposited for the benefit of the adventurers, but what is by them contributed; and yet immense profits arise for the benefit of the managers. And that such

immense profits should be realized without the employment of any capital, seems irreconcilable with all the principles that regulate commercial transactions.

"Besides, in the case of assurance, both parties are interested that the event should be determined in the same manner—that is, that there should be no loss; and thus all the heart-burnings, envy and jealousy which exist among ticket-holders on account of the opposition of their interests, have no place under a policy of assurance.

"Nor does a policy of assurance afford a mere chance of gratification (which is all a lottery ticket gives), but a present substantial benefit, in that peace of mind which the security of property is calculated to afford. Nor does the advantage stop with the person assured, for the process that guaranties security to him, is beneficial to the whole community in all its relations with that individual—and hence, assurances form a main pillar in the structure of commercial integrity."*

* Gordon, pp. 13, 14.

Lotteries cannot be vindicated by any supposed analogy to the system of insurance. They belong to the art of gambling, and are one of its most pernicious forms. The repute in which they have been held, has given them a character which more recent statutes have not wholly destroyed. Ticket venders for foreign lotteries find a large market in our own city. Several fictitious exchange-offices are supported solely by the traffick in lottery tickets.

5. But in addition to these general influences, which tend to corrupt the principles of young men, and to seduce them into the practice of gambling, there are positive forms in which the temptation to this vice assails them; *there are influences employed directly to lead them into it.*

In this city, gaming-houses are not, as in Paris, licensed by law; on the contrary, they are prohibited: yet they exist in great numbers. Some of these establishments are conducted in the most costly manner, and bewilder the unwary who are led into them. The external appearance of the house, is simply that

of a neat and perhaps elegant private mansion. There are no loungers at the door or the windows, no gaudy curtains, no stained glass nor gilded casements. Nothing is in bad taste, but every thing is quiet and genteel. The parlors are furnished with elegance, the table is spread with the delicacies of the season, and the sideboard with the choicest wines; the servants are attentive, the host keeps open house, and seems to keep open heart, for the supper and wine are free to every genteel comer. Gaming is carried on here merely as a pastime, for gentlemen of fortune. None but gentlemen are admitted; there is no rowdyism, no vulgarity; and cheating is of course prohibited by the code of honor. Into such a place a young man who is beginning, as the phrase goes, to see life, one who, as yet, has not been initiated into the mysteries of gambling, is introduced either as a casual visitor or an invited guest. He feels himself complimented by being in such company, though he has fully resolved not to play; he looks on for a while, and enjoys the game; envies the winner; looks wistfully upon the bank; feels the wine that

he has taken; at the least hint from another, he puts in and tries his hand; has luck; tries again; lucky again; doubles his stakes; still on the winning hand; ventures still more; loses; is advised to stop, but risks another round; wins again; is complimented for his skill; pronounced a lucky fellow; fears are expressed for the bank itself; he grows bold; stakes every dollar on the card he has played so well; loses; tries to borrow, but can't be accommodated; goes away calling himself a fool; but if he is a fool, he has had luck, and it may return to him. Next night he goes again; and the next; he becomes wedded to the place; he plunges deeper and deeper, until —but I am now sketching his temptations, not his career.

The establishments of which I have spoken, employ their agents,—'stool-pigeons' is the technical name—genteel and accomplished men, who frequent the hotels, perhaps board at them, to court the acquaintance of strangers who are flush of money, to show them the lions of the city, to accompany them to the theater, and gradually to draw them within the

reach of their own accomplices. These same men have an eye to young men of fortune, to confidential clerks, and others whom they may hope to victimize, and with unparalleled adroitness they almost nightly inveigle some into their toils. These are the men whom our text describes. "*They sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.*" Night after night they prowl after their prey; and sleep not, till some new victim writhes within their grasp—his young hopes and virtues crushed, his character torn and bleeding, his very life-blood sucked out, and his soul well-nigh destroyed. They sleep not till they have caused some to fall; till they have plundered some unsuspecting youth of his all for time and for eternity, and then have scouted him from their presence with fiendish jeers, or have detained him in the desperation of his guilt and anguish to be a tool for every crime. Oh, young men, shun these monsters. Avoid their gilded lair. "Pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

It is difficult to find language strong enough to depict the odiousness of the gambler's cha-

racter. An Italian gentleman once gave me his early impressions of the Jesuits, in these words—"When a boy, I was at play with other children, upon the margin of a lake overhung by cliffs and skirted with woodland. Presently we saw upon the opposite bank, a number of men in long frocks and broad-brimmed hats, threading their way in single file down the steep toward a little boat. We were eyeing them with childish curiosity, and wondering who they were, when one of the older boys, pressing his finger to his lips, exclaimed, '*Hist! hist! They are Jesuits!*'—'Jesuits!' 'Jesuits!' we all whispered in terror; and in an instant the whole group of children were scattered among the trees, seeking concealment from beings whose very name they had been taught to dread."

With such feelings should the professed gambler be regarded. As he walks the streets, childhood should flee in terror at his approach; uncontaminated youth should hide from the very sight of him; the maiden—her brow now blanched with fear, and now suffused with indignation—should spurn him from her path;

honest manhood should shrink from contact with the basest of the species; and old age, leaning on its staff, too feeble to turn aside for refuge, should lift its eyes to heaven to be delivered from a contamination more foul than the grave. The gambler should be made to feel that he is a marked man; that in earth's homes and in earth's hearts there is no place for him; that on his habitation is written "*hell*," and on his brow is written "*fiend!*"

I need not dwell upon the more open allurements to gambling which are presented at the race-course, and upon public festive occasions. Young men who expose themselves to such temptations almost invariably become corrupt. Those who would keep themselves pure should shun the way of evil men; they should not even pass by it, but should "turn from it and pass away."

Enough has now been said to show you that the discussion of this subject was called for, and that the warning of the text is needed. To make that warning effectual, let me now

turn your thoughts to some of the consequences of gambling.

1. *Gambling is a sinful waste of time, of health, and of property.*

Gambling cannot be pleaded for as an innocent amusement. It does not answer the end which is the only criterion of the propriety of any species of amusement—namely: that of refreshing the body and of enlivening the mind. No one will pretend that gambling is a useful occupation, or that the skill which it requires is at all beneficial to the community. The *time*, therefore, which is consumed in this manner, is always wasted. It is commonly the time that should be given to repose. But no man has a right thus to throw away time in a vain occupation; to waste the hours which might be appropriated to intellectual and moral improvement—to the cultivation of the domestic affections—to honest industry—to the good of mankind—or even to the necessary repose of the body. It is a sin for which the prodigal must answer at the bar of God.

Health too is sacrificed by the practice of gambling. The late hours, the intense excitement, the consequent anxiety, the frequent remorse, the incessant drinking, and the general dissipation, almost invariably associated with gambling, render it destructive to the health of those who engage in it; unless, having taken it up professionally, they have learned to play without excitement, and to cheat without compunction, and to sleep away the fumes of wine in the hours of honest labor.

Gambling is also a sinful waste of *property.* It may be said that by this means property simply changes hands. But he who loses is none the less a waster, for he throws away what God has given him for the support of himself and of his family, if any he has, and as the means of benefiting others. And he who gains, regarding property as the mere fruit of low cunning and trickery, to be acquired without labor whenever needed, squanders upon his own lusts that which he knows not how to value.

2. *Gambling is destructive of all good habits and affections of the mind and the heart.* I

have already alluded to the disastrous effects of the unnatural excitement of the gaming table upon the physical constitution. Its effects are no less disastrous upon the mind itself. The mind becomes dissatisfied with the ordinary pursuits of life—with business, with study, with official duties and responsibilities, with every thing but the stimulus upon which it has made itself dependent. It grows neither in knowledge nor in virtue. The grosser passions and appetites, covetousness, envy, jealousy, pride, malice—every thing that is dark and repulsive in the human soul—gains the ascendency. The domestic affections are blasted; the family is neglected, and the property that should provide for its comfort is wickedly squandered. This habit makes terrible havoc of one's inward peace. And what is a man at war with himself?

In the words of another, "Gambling furnishes no valuable information: it adds no strength to the reasoning powers. So far as it has influence at all, it wearies the intellectual faculties; and is attended with all the fatigue, but with no part of the benefit, which is ex-

perienced in severe study. It neither sweetens nor enlivens the temper. On the contrary, it is a grave, dull, spiritless employment; at which almost all persons lose their cheerfulness, and impair their native sweetness of disposition; in which the temper is soured; and in which gloom and moroseness, and frequently envy and malice, are not only created, but strengthened into immovable habits. Gamesters, indeed, herd together. But it is without good-will or social feelings, and merely because gaming makes it necessary. Their minds are engrossed, but not invigorated. Their time is ardently and anxiously, but not cheerfully employed. . . . . Into the heart of a man, engrossed by schemes of acquiring the property of his neighbor by the throwing of dice, and the shuffling of cards, it is impossible that *benevolence* should enter. In acts of *beneficence*, hands which have so long been made the instruments of covetousness and plunder, can never be employed." * The habitual gamester is a stranger to all that is useful, and generous, and

* Dr. Dwight.

noble, and good. His heart is a barren heath, or a nest of dragons.

3. *Gambling leads to many other vices and crimes.* In my lecture on dishonesty, I spoke of the connection between this practice and that crime. It is unnecessary to add any thing upon that point: but even since that lecture was delivered, facts have come to my knowledge, some of which I do not feel at liberty to make public, showing that acts of dishonesty, not only on the part of young men, but even of older men of business, are more frequently to be traced to gambling than to any other cause; that not only the more flagrant cases of embezzlement by clerks and agents, but failures in business, are often owing to this pernicious habit.

A young man in this city drew $10,000 in a lottery. With this sum he went into partnership with a respectable mercantile house. He subsequently expended all his own capital for lottery tickets, and embezzled the property of the firm, so that they were obliged to compound with their creditors at twenty-five cents on the dollar. Another young man, the secre-

tary of an insurance company, drew $10,000, spent it all, then forged certificates of stock, sold them, and finally absconded with an abandoned female.

It is a well attested fact, that in all cases of delinquency on the part of the officers of the former Bank of the United States, whether belonging to the principal institution or its branches, the funds embezzled were squandered upon lottery tickets. In a period of five years, according to the records of the Insolvent Court of Philadelphia, it was shown that nearly $200,000 were lost by dealing in lottery tickets, on the part of those who applied for the benefit of the insolvent law. Some individuals had lost twenty or thirty thousand dollars, and several testified that their insolvency was owing to those losses alone.*

Men who gamble soon become reckless in the conduct of their business affairs.

*These facts are stated on the authority of Job R. Tyson, Esq., of Philadelphia, whose elaborate pamphlet upon lotteries I have read with much interest. The facts that follow are chiefly derived from the valuable appendix to Mr. Gordon's lecture.

A young man of ——, (a cooper,) bought a few tickets in a lottery, and drew $10,000, for which he obtained $8,300. He purchased a house, and as he knew lottery money was "hard to hold," had the deed made in his wife's name. He continued to purchase tickets, soon contracted habits of intemperance, from a kind husband he became abusive, spent all his money, and his wife, to prevent his arrest, mortgaged the house, but was soon obliged to sell it, to procure means to keep him out of prison. He is now a confirmed drunkard, and his family are in destitute circumstances.

A young man, also of ——, a son of a wealthy merchant, was one of four who drew $10,000. This success caused him to purchase many tickets. He became involved; his naturally amiable disposition, from repeated disappointment, was supplanted by excitability and chagrin; he became intemperate and addicted to gaming in various ways, and soon after left the country, deeply in debt. He went to the West Indies, and there continued his habits of gaming and dissipation, and was finally obliged to leave in the night, for fear of assassination. He then came back to the United States, and immediately shipped as a common sailor round Cape Horn.—The other three persons who shared the $10,000 with him, soon after failed, as was supposed, from venturing largely in lotteries.

Another young man, (a clerk,) drew $3,000. He commenced business, but continued to purchase tickets until he lost all the property he possessed, (being more than he drew in the lottery,) and finally failed, and is now

very poor, and obliged to labor hard for a subsistence. But sad experience has not taught him the folly of relying upon *chance;* the deceitful promises of the lottery still have their influence over his visionary and credulous mind, and he declares he would spend still more for tickets, if he could afford it.

Another person, also of ——, who kept a store, and devoted his whole time to his business, and scarcely left his store during the week, unfortunately drew a prize of $5000. He still continued to pay strict attention to his business, and was no less temperate in his habits. But his success in the lottery proved his ruin. From that time he expended hundreds of dollars in each lottery that was presented to him, until he had exhausted all he had made by lotteries, all he had accumulated by a long course of successful industry, and all he could command by his credit. The result was certain. *He failed;* and, although he continued his habit of industry, became very poor. He probably sunk $12,000 or $15,000 in this most ruinous of all systems of gaming, over and above the prize money he received.

An extensive dealer in malt liquors, drew, four or five years ago, a lottery prize of $10,000. He was previously supposed to be worth from 15 to 20,000 dollars, and was highly esteemed for his industry and perseverance in business. He rarely purchased a ticket previously to his drawing the prize—afterwards his adventures became very extensive, and in about a year he failed, and was able to pay only his preferred creditors.

A young man who was formerly employed as a clerk in the Post Office at ——, drew a prize of $8,000. Dissipated habits, and gaming of various kinds, caused his dismission by the Post Master, and subsequently his ruin.

A person, several years ago, drew a prize of $50,000, for which he received in cash $42,500—and yet *all this* was not enough to pay the demands against him for lottery tickets. He owed the brokers at the time $45,000.

A respectable farmer in the interior of this state, drew, several years ago, a prize of $10,000. His first expenditures embraced many improvements upon his farm, and the building of a large house. But the tavern soon overcame his attachment to his family—his pecuniary affairs were neglected—he became a bankrupt, a drunkard, and, to end his miserable existence, was his own murderer.

A person residing in ——, drew $25,000. He was a watchmaker—which business he immediately closed, and had deposited in the bank at the time over $19,000 in money. His first step was to build a house at an expense of $10,000. He then opened a store with an extensive assortment of goods, and purchased a brig for whaling. In three years he failed, and was deficient $18,000—having squandered in this short period the sum of $37,000.

An Editor of a newspaper relates the following circumstance, which is a striking exemplification of the mutability of riches obtained by lotteries.—"A man," says he, "who a few years ago was *blessed* with about $20,000 lottery money, yesterday applied to us for 9d. to pay for a night's lodging.

A Mr. G——, of Franklin county, Mass., drew, about ten years since, a prize of $20,000 in a lottery. He was a trader of a respectable family, but not possessed of much property. After he drew the prize he neglected his business, became dissipated and intemperate in his habits, and within two years past, he has been declared by the selectmen of the town in which he resided, a vagabond, and a guardian has been appointed to take charge of his remaining property for the benefit of his wife and family. To avoid the alms-house he fled to New-York, taking with him two of his children. During the last summer his children, that he took away with him, were found by one of his former acquaintances in the streets of New-York, in a deplorable state of misery, being nearly starved, and almost naked—and were taken by him to his own house, where they remained till an opportunity offered to convey them to their mother and friends in Massachusetts.

A young man, a native of E——, N. H., a few years ago, was so unfortunate as to draw a prize of $1,000 in a lottery. Previously he had established a good character for industry, prudence, and moral conduct—at the time he was a machinist in a large manufacturing establishment. His success so infatuated the people in that vicinity, that, during the six subsequent days, one lottery broker in the village where he then resided, took $3,000 for tickets. The effect on him personally was still worse. On drawing the prize he changed his business, and opened a grocery store—with his business, he changed his habits—and about two years afterwards, died a drunkard, by the side of his

own rum cask, leaving a wife to deplore his ruin and death. In the village where the manufactory was situated, two other young men, his associates, have subsequently ruined themselves by the same species of gaming. One of them soon after died of intemperance, and the other is now a confirmed drunkard.

The philosophy of all this is plain. Gambling unhinges the mind; success bewilders it; the habits of industry and of self-reliance are abandoned under the infatuation of luck, and ultimate ruin is inevitable.

The habit of *intemperance* is intimately associated with gambling. The experienced gambler, it is true, will not drink largely while the game is pending. But wine is employed as a bait to the inexperienced. The new player begins under the influence of liquor; the excitement of the game provokes his thirst; then he drinks to keep up that excitement; he drinks to commemorate his success, and he drinks to drown his losses. Other vices, too, cluster thick about this habit. Profaneness, Sabbath-breaking, lewdness, and debauchery of every kind, commonly grow with, and often grow out of the practice of gambling. It in-

flames the soul with unholy passions, till there is nothing too vile for its taste.

Crimes grow in the same hot-bed. The gambler is often associated with counterfeiters and thieves. Murder is perpetrated under the excitement of the game. Lust burns in the gambler's heart, and every fiendish passion boils in the gambler's hell.

One of the most fearful evils of the lottery system, was the number of suicides which it occasioned. Some years since, a man committed suicide in this city, upon whose person were found a card of address giving a *grog*-shop as his boarding house, *three* blank lottery tickets, and a leaf of "Seneca's Morals," containing an apology for self-murder. The number of suicides in Paris traceable to disappointment in the drawing of lotteries, has been computed at one hundred per annum.

The drawing of a single lottery in London, was followed the same night by fifty suicides among the holders of unlucky tickets.

Since I came into the pulpit this evening, I have received a note from a gentleman in the house, who is personally known to me,

stating that he was acquainted with three young men in London, who became addicted to gambling, and were ruined by it, and all of whom committed suicide in consequence. The first hung himself, the second cut his own throat, and the third blew his brains out.

Finally, gambling *is invariably sinful.* It differs in this respect from wine-drinking, which was considered in the last lecture. That is not of itself morally wrong. But gambling is always not only an evil but a sin. It is a fraudulent mode of acquiring property, the resort to which always implies covetousness, and ill-will toward a neighbor. Upon this point the argument of President Dwight is irresistible. "There are but two possible methods," he says, "by which we can acquire property from others honestly, viz., either by free gift, or by rendering an equivalent for what we receive. But property won by gaming, is not obtained in either of these ways. That which is acquired, neither is nor is intended to be given: and instead of an equivalent, the gamester renders nothing for what he has received. . . . . No man ever sat down to a game, with an

entire consent that his antagonist should win his property: i. e. when the property staked is considered as of some serious importance. Every person who is a party in a game of this nature, intends to win the property of his antagonist, and not to lose his own. His own he stakes, only because the stake is absolutely necessary to enable him to win that of his antagonist. Thus, instead of consenting to lose his own property, each of the parties intends merely to obtain that of his neighbor for nothing. This is the only real design of both: and this design is as unjust and as fraudulent as any, which respects property, can be. That such is the only real design, the loser proves, in the clearest manner, by deeply lamenting his loss; and the winner, in a manner little less clear, by exulting in his gain."

Gambling in principle is but genteel robbery; a mode of getting possession of a neighbor's property unjustly, without his free consent, and without giving him any equivalent for it. It matters not that by his own act he exposes his property to such a risk. He has no moral

right so to expose it; and you have no right to take advantage of his wrong-doing.

In addition to this, how much fraud is practiced in the game itself, by experienced hands taking advantage of the uninitiated. Cheating is uniformly practiced at the gaming table.

But while gambling is invariably a sin, it is a sin that is peculiarly fascinating, and that grows by indulgence with appalling rapidity and strength. I know not but that it is more difficult to reform an habitual gambler than it is to reform the grossest drunkard. There is a strange infatuation about this habit, which seems to impel its victims onward with a recklessness that fills the devout mind with pity and with horror—to the sacrifice of property, of health, of peace of mind, of friends, of position, of character, and of life itself. Nothing hardens the heart against good influences like the habit of gambling.

Some fifteen years ago, the clerk of a Boston house, a man in middle life, committed suicide by drowning himself in a basin near that city. So eminent was his character for integrity and

purity, that when he was found dead, every one believed that he had been murdered, until the acknowledgment of his guilt was found in his own handwriting. In the short space of between seven and eight months he had embezzled the sum of $18,000, every cent of which was lost on lottery tickets. But listen to his own confession, found in his desk, and published in the Boston papers at the time.

"I have for the last seven months gone fast down the broad road to destruction. There was a time, and that but a few months since, that I was happy because I was free from debt and care. The time I note my downfall, or deviation from the path of rectitude, was about the middle of last June, when I took a share in a company of lottery tickets, whereby I was successful in obtaining a share of one half the capital prize; since which I have gone for myself, and that, too, not on a very small scale, as you can judge from the amount due J. R. & Co., every dollar of which has been spent in that way. I have lived or dragged out a miserable existence for two or three months past. Sleepless nights and a guilty

conscience have led me to the fatal act. Only the hope of making Messrs. J. R. & Co. good for the defalcation has postponed it till the present time ; a smaller amount, I did hope, would be the result, for the worse luck I had the more I bought. Since I have reflected on my rashness, I cannot look back and see how it is possible I could have conducted in this way. When the situation I occupied, and the confidence reposed in me, and the long time I have been engaged, and the reward for my poor services by ——, that all should be lost in one moment—but the loss is too much for me to bear. Oh that seven or eight months past of my existence could be blotted out—but no, I must go, and ere this paper is read, my spirit is gone to my Maker, to give an account of my misdeeds here, and receive the dreadful sentence for self-destruction and abused confidence. Relations and friends I have, from whom I do not wish to part under such circumstances, but necessity—O wretch! lotteries have been thy ruin! I cannot add more."

And need *I* add more? Shall not this tale

of horror suffice to restrain you from the very first step in this career of infamy and crime? "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." Do not linger about their haunts. Do not go over the threshold. Do not dally with this temptation. Do not meddle with cards or dice.

When you are tempted to gamble, remember that you are really tempted to engage in a game with the arch deceiver, in which *you* are the stake;—your virtue, your peace, your character, your *soul*—all are hazarded in the insane excitement. "And what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and *lose* HIMSELF?"

This closing thought is strikingly illustrated in the famous etching by Retzsch, a copy of which, on a reduced scale, has been inserted as a frontispiece to this volume. The following is the interpretation which accompanies the original.

Satan, the spirit of darkness, is here seen playing with a man for his soul. The place selected for the game is so awfully impressive, that it conveys at once the whole idea. The surrounding architectural devices comport with the repulsive visitor—the hideous objects awakening terror in our sphere. Upon the face of an arch which spans the entire view, are seen the long bodies of two lizard-shaped monsters, with heads half-bird and half-reptile, which are spreading out their short and hideous claws, and seem to be crawling down the two pillars.

The upper surface of a sarcophagus is represented as the chess-board. The man—a fine looking youth, sits upon a table, with a sad countenance, loosely holding in his hand his rich and ample ringlets. Opposite to him, to the left of the spectator, sits *Satan* in a chair, the back of which is the open jaw of a lion (he goes about like a roaring lion), and the lower part, the claws of a lion fastened into a death's-head, signifying his destructive power.

A broad mantle covers him, from which nothing projects but his bony claw-like fingers. His hair and whiskers are wild, erect, and bristling. In his cap appears one stiffly-bent cock's-feather, which is noticed before every thing else as *suspicious*. His brow is noble, for he is still a fallen angel: but the expression of that apostacy is hideous and devilish. His look—the "liar from the beginning," the treacherous player, the faithless ally, may all be read in it—is a combination of the coolness of the tiger and the ferocity of the hyena. Scorn, contempt, malicious pleasure, every detestable feeling here finds a lineament; and

the hand covering the chin leaves it doubtful, whether it conceals a hellish smile at the successful move, or keeps back a horrid oath—at which the gates of the lower world would tremble—because the deliverance of his antagonist may yet be possible.

Between the players, a little back of them, stands a fair, lovely, angel-form, with white wings, a child of light, the guardian Genius of the youth, unseen by him. To drive this being away is not in Satan's power. Only the man himself can dismiss it or drive it from him. Therefore this Genius, like conscience, only warns; it neither counsels nor decides. It looks sorrowfully upon the critical position of the game, and has already turned partly away from its trust.

To return now to the game itself.

The figure of the *King* on the side of Satan represents himself, enveloped in a mantle, but distinguishable at the first glance. His troops press briskly forward. His *Queen* is—*Voluptuousness*: a wanton female figure, with uncovered bosom, her left hand drawing her garment close about her voluptuous form, while the right holds out the cup of intoxication.

The six officers are vices, as follows.

1. *Idleness;* a plump, gross figure, with a swine's head and tail, dangling, misshapen arms, and unwieldy legs, sitting upon a block.

2. *Anger;* a figure pressing forward vehemently, resembling in general an enraged turkey-cock,—it wears the

head of this fowl, spreads out its wings, and bristles up its prickly comb on its neck and back.

3. *Pride;* striding stiffly and gravely along, his lofty head ornamented with a crown of feathers, his arm conceitedly a-kimbo; he forgets while spreading out a splendid peacock's tail, that he thus exposes his own nakedness. He has spurs upon his feet, and the badge of an order on his breast. In one hand is a sack full of gold; the other is stretched out imperiously.

4. *Falsehood;* a figure with a tiger's skin, a horned cat's head, and ears falling back treacherously. It offers one hand confidingly, while the other conceals a dagger behind its back.

5. *Envy* and *Covetousness* in one person; a lank, cringing figure, which gnaws its own fist, and clasps a little chest under its arm.

6. *Unbelief;* a figure in the attitude of defiance, with both fists planted on its sides, and overturning a cross with its foot.

The eight pawns are *doubts*, little harpy-like creatures, with the wings of bats, and sharp teeth.

On the side of the man stands as *King* his own *soul*, drawing a white robe about itself, firmly and anxiously; having butterfly wings upon its shoulders. The *Queen* is *Religion*—the soul's most powerful guardian—a tall, majestic figure, with large wings—one hand outstretched for defence, the other carrying the sign of the atonement.

The officers are

1. *Hope;* with an anchor.

2. *Truth;* with lighted torch and burnished shield, standing nearest to Hope as a rock by her side.

3. *Joy;* with the palm.

4. *Humility;* praying with downcast look, clothed scantily with a skin.

5. *Innocence;* a naked child, trustfully reaching forth its hands.

6. *Love;* two children embracing each other, cheek to cheek, a star shining over them both.

The pawns here throughout are winged angels' busts in the attitude of supplication, which signify prayer; and as in the game a lost officer may be redeemed by pawns, so through prayer many a spiritual loss may be retrieved.

The game looks badly for the man. Already has the fiend weakened him by the capture of several of the angel-heads—the prayers; already has he taken from him Love and Innocence; yea, already has he robbed him of Joy, which he even now holds in his clutches. Lust, unbelief, and evil doubts, press violently upon the noble and calm figure of Religion, which has placed itself as a guard before the man now attacked on every hand, who, so long as he does not give up Religion, may yet hope to escape.

Yet Falsehood has already contrived to insinuate itself there, and to offer its deceitful right hand, while the poor youth has for the first time conquered a single doubt.

The very next move may occasion him the loss of the game. The position of many a youth is even more hopeless than this. No art can portray, no language can

describe, the peril of a soul that is scheming for the world, and is forgetful of God.

(The significant emblems upon the sarcophagus in the original engraving do not appear in this reduced copy.)

LECTURE IV.

PROFANENESS AND SABBATH-BREAKING.

EXODUS XX. 7, 8.—*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.*

THESE are the third and fourth commandments of the decalogue. They inculcate in common reverence for Jehovah; though the one is moral, and grows out of the very relation of man to his Maker, and the other refers to a positive institution, not prescribed by the law of nature.

Reverence for the Supreme Being is the foundation of all religion. The pagan nations of antiquity never suffered their gods to be profaned. It is said that the Athenians, when their renowned and successful general Alcibiades profaned the names of their gods, on the eve of a battle, indignantly refused to suffer him to

march against the enemy, until he had appeased the gods by an atonement for his impiety. Not a few of our military men need a similar rebuke.

The Jews never pronounced the name JEHOVAH in common conversation, nor even suffered it to be read in their synagogues. The word *Adonai* was always substituted, in the reading of the Scriptures, for that peculiar name by which the great I AM, had revealed Himself to Abraham.

A Jewish teacher of the Hebrew tongue, with whom I was acquainted, in reading the Scriptures, would always pause reverently at the name of Jehovah, and pass it over in silence.

The Mohammedans, it is said, if they cannot read, lay aside with care every written or printed slip of paper that comes within their reach, lest it should have upon it the name of God.

This is superstition. But would that we might see in Christian lands more of that reverence for the Supreme Being, which such acts of superstition indicate: a reverence

manifesting itself not by formalities or by mummeries, but by an intelligent homage to the majesty of heaven.

Such homage, as I have said, lies at the foundation of true religion. The first four commandments of the decalogue all enjoin it: the first, teaches us whom only we shall worship; the second relates to the mode of worship, intelligent and spiritual, without the aid of material images; the third enjoins that reverence which is due to the name of God; and the fourth directs us to devote a seventh part of our time to the exclusive service of God.

While in this country there is no gross and visible idolatry, there is yet a lamentable want of reverence both for the name of God and for the day which He has appointed for His worship. Profaneness and Sabbath-breaking are prevalent and crying sins. They are also sins to which young men, especially in cities, are very generally addicted. I shall therefore consider them together, with reference to this class of hearers.

By profaneness, I intend the use of language

which implies irreverence toward God. The term is used to denote irreverence toward sacred things in general; as for example, when we speak of profaning a temple, which may be done by acts as well as by words. But what I have now in view, is not a disregard of things commonly deemed sacred, but irreverence toward God himself, and that too expressed in language. There are certain momentous occasions upon which a solemn appeal to God is both justifiable and important: when "an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife." Hence the propriety of the judicial oath, for ensuring the integrity of witnesses; though the oath is sometimes administered with so little solemnity, and upon occasions so trivial, that the ceremony itself seems like profaneness. The members of the French National Assembly, have perhaps wisely concluded that they can trust one another as well without an oath as with one. The Republic lives in the hearts of her citizens, and not upon their lips. This indicates a great advance in the moral convictions of the French people.

Paul sometimes calls God to witness the

sincerity of his motives: though it ought to be understood that the phrase "God forbid," so frequent in the Epistle to the Romans, and elsewhere in the writings of this Apostle, is not an exact translation of his words. He does not use the name God in that manner, even where he is represented as saying, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." The name God does not here occur in the original. The ejaculation is equivalent to the phrase, "By no means," "Let it not so be." The mode in which it is translated, illustrates the manner of the times in the reign of king James. It is unfortunate that the New Testament in our version thus seems to sanction a familiar use of the name of God. Paul did not thus appeal to God merely to point an argument; it was not his habit as a writer or a preacher, to fortify his sentiments by such appeals; only on occasions of peculiar solemnity—as in Romans ix. 1–4 did he invoke the name of God in proof of his sincerity.

While therefore the occasions are but few in which an appeal to God in the form of an

oath is justifiable, such an appeal, when made with due solemnity, and on an occasion sufficiently important, is not prohibited by this commandment. It is not the use of the name of God which is forbidden, according to the superstition of the Jews, but the thoughtless, irreverent use of that name; the use of it on trifling occasions, or with a trifling spirit, so as to destroy that reverence which is due to Jehovah from his intelligent creatures.

Of course this precept forbids perjury:—the calling upon God to witness the truth of that which is known to be a falsehood; or the attempt to establish falsehood under the sanction of an oath.

It forbids also the cursing of our fellow creatures in anger; and any light, familiar, irreverent use of the name of God, the habit of referring to God on all occasions, in familiar conversation, without any apparent motive, and without any warrant in the circumstances of the speaker, or in the end to be accomplished.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God *in vain*;" i. e. *to a trifle*.

Sabbath-breaking, the disregard of the day which God has set apart as a day of sacred rest, is well enough understood, without explanation.

Both these sins, profaneness and Sabbath-breaking, are, as I have intimated, direct acts of irreverence toward God. But there is a peculiarity about the sin of *profaneness*, which distinguishes it from almost every other. There are powerful temptations to dishonesty, to intemperance, to gambling, in the form of some apparent good to be realized, some gain to be secured, or some appetite to be gratified. The same is true of lying, of stealing, of lewdness, and of murder. There is some assignable motive for each of these vices and crimes, which serves to account for, though it may not palliate them. When a man lies, steals, gets drunk, commits adultery or murder, or swears falsely, we can almost always see the end which he proposes to himself in so doing; but I should be glad to be informed by any habitual swearer, what benefit he derives from profaneness, or what motive influences him in this matter. If he could specify any, he would

solve a question which has perplexed some of the most profound students of human character; for it is a question upon which the greatest theologians have acknowledged themselves at fault. Robert Hall says of it, "The criminality of taking the Lord's name in vain is enhanced by the absence of every reasonable temptation. It is not, like many other vices, productive of either pleasure or emolument; it is neither adapted to gratify any natural appetite or passion, nor to facilitate the attainment of a single end which a reasonable creature can be supposed to have in view. It is properly the 'superfluity of naughtiness,' and can only be considered as a sort of peppercorn rent, in acknowledgment of the devil's right of superiority. It is a vice by which no man's reputation is extended, no man's fortune is increased, no man's sensual gratifications are augmented. If we attempt to analyze it, and reduce it to its real motive, we find ourselves at a total loss to discover any other than irreligious ostentation, a desire of convincing the world that its perpetrators are not under the restraint of religious fear. But as this

motive is most impious and detestable, so the practice arising from it is not at all requisite for that purpose; since the persons who persist in it may safely leave it to other parts of their character to exonerate them from the suspicion of their being fearers of God. We beg leave to remind them that they are in no danger of being classed with the pious, either in this world or in that which is to come; and may therefore safely spare themselves the trouble of inscribing the name of their master on their foreheads. They are not so near to the kingdom of God as to be liable to be mistaken for its subjects."

Says Dr. Dwight,—"In profaneness there seems to be no good, either enjoyed or expected, beside that which is found in the mere love and indulgence of sin. No person ever acquired property, health, reputation, place, power, nor it would seem pleasure, from profaneness. Those particular movements of the tongue, which articulate profaneness, produce, so far as I am able to conjecture, no more agreeable sensations, than any other. The words, which embody profane thoughts, are

neither smoother nor sweeter than any other words."

Says Dr. Emmons,—"Profane swearing is the most unnatural sin in this wicked world. It does not originate from any natural propensity, instinct, or appetite, in the human mind, but is contrary to every dictate of reason and conscience."

These eminent moral philosophers and divines admit, that in the whole range of motives with which they are conversant, they can discover none which is adequate to account for this sin of profaneness. Can *you*, then, assign a motive for it?—*You*, whose speech is interlarded with oaths; whose lips scarce open without uttering a profane word; —you, who are hourly calling upon God to damn your soul, or the soul of your neighbor; —you, who pour forth the most dreadful execrations upon a poor brute, or any inanimate object that happens to annoy you; and who make the name of God or of the Savior of men, the filling up of every sentence, and the point of every joke;—can you solve this vexed question in morals, and tell me what pleasure

or profit you derive from profaneness; what impulse of your nature does it gratify; what want of your soul does it relieve; wherein does it make you better or happier?

Perhaps I can suggest an answer. A mind highly excited, especially with anger, finds relief in strong, passionate words. It eases itself, therefore, by a volley of oaths and imprecations. A clergyman residing in an eastern village, one day encountered on the street a neighbor in a frenzy of passion, pouring forth oaths like a torrent of burning lava. The good man stood aghast, like Christian in the dark valley, where hell vomited up its flames and sulphur on either hand. But presently the swearer ceased, and turning from the object of his passion to the minister, he said, mildly, "Good morning, sir; you can pass on now; for I have *cleared myself out.*" No doubt passion, though for a time it may be heightened, is in the end gratified and relieved, by the free utterance of curses against its object. The swearer, when enraged, practices a two-fold incantation upon himself; he raises the foul fiend within him by vociferating in

the dialect of hell, and then casts him out with the stench of his own sulphur and smoke. "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell."

This will explain why men swear in a passion; though I do not see why it would not often answer just as well to say abbakadabra, or any thing else.

But the practice of common swearing, when there is no anger nor excitement to impel to the use of violent and profane language; the practice of lightly and irreverently using the name of God upon all occasions, it is difficult to account for on any supposition but that of sheer wanton wickedness; a wish to manifest a disregard for God in the most open and offensive manner—a sort of bravado against the Supreme Being, indulged in through the pride of iniquity; or, as Robert Hall terms it, an "irreligious ostentation," designed to convince the world that here is a man who has "no fear of God before his eyes." If this be so, what sin can be compared with the sin of profane-

ness in its audacity? Or if, as some will say, it is a mere habit by which no evil is intended, this implies the same state of irreverence toward God, though the swearer may not be distinctly conscious of it, whenever he utters an oath.

Probably few persons begin this practice without compunctions of conscience. The habit of swearing not being derived from any marked original propensity of our nature, is commonly learned from others, and learned gradually. Some children are so unfortunate as to acquire it from their parents, before they understand the meaning of the words they use. How pitiable the lot of a child who grows up without the sentiment of reverence for God; whose parents destroy his moral sense, and train him up for infamy!

The habit of swearing is usually formed in youth. Frequently it is borrowed from books or caught from associates. A boy feels that he is doing bravely, fast growing into a man, when he ventures on an oath. But the moral sense which is shocked at the first hearing of an oath, must be blunted and seared before

this habit can be contracted by one who has any just views of God. Let young men heed the first intimations of conscience, and they will never become profane.

I propose now to offer some considerations which should deter you from this sin.

1. It is generally admitted by swearers themselves, that the habit of profaneness is *useless*. Not unfrequently they apologize for it, to those to whom it is offensive, as a habit to which they have insensibly become addicted, but of which they are really ashamed. Hardly an attempt is made to justify this practice. Every man's conscience is against it. Setting aside the irreverence of the thing, I know not where to look for a more ridiculous object than a profane person. As I was riding in a stage the other day, there sat opposite to me a well-dressed man whom I took to be a gentleman; but presently he undeceived me; for, stopping the stage, he passed a shilling to the driver and received in change six cents instead of a sixpence; whereupon he began to curse both the driver and the coppers, and

went off muttering imprecations as long as the ear could catch the sound of his voice. My first feeling was that of horror—that I had been so near the contagion of the pit without knowing it; my next, was mingled pity and contempt for the poor, foolish creature, who had so degraded himself. How absurd was his conduct! Did he suppose that the dread Judge of all the earth would condemn the hapless stage-driver for burdening a passenger with copper money? Did he feel that the man on whom he invoked the vengeance of eternal fire deserved it for such an offence? Or would he have the unoffending metal consigned to the fires of hell? Poor, senseless creature! What a fool does a man make of himself, when he begins to swear!

So you will see a truckman belaboring his poor horse, as it staggers under an oppressive load, and cursing the dumb animal, till you wish that the gift of Balaam's ass were universal, and that brutes might teach men reason.

The swearer strikes his foot against a stone, and forthwith curses it, as if it could hear and

suffer under his maledictions. It must go to the place of eternal misery, because he has been so careless as to injure himself by it. Every trifling disappointment, every petty annoyance, elicits from him the same unmanly, useless round of oaths.

Self-respect should deter every young man from such a weak and silly practice. It is weak and unmanly. An oath gives no additional value to your opinion; like a bet, it rather shows that you feel your mere word to be of little account. Swearing shows you to be incapable of self-government and insensible of the worth of that soul upon which you so freely invoke eternal damnation.

2. Swearing is also a *vulgar* practice. It is not tolerated in really good society, and it is considered an insult in the presence of ladies. It is most frequent where men are most vile.

Young men in fashionable life endeavor to refine upon it. Not venturing to damn a man or a thing outright, they will simply "dem" it; not liking a too frequent association with the dread Supreme, they will give His name some

strange orthography and accent, which it were irreverent for me to repeat. And so the poet, the novelist, and the humorist, will indicate an oath by a dash or an asterisk, when they would not soil the page by writing it out. But in spite of these devices, swearing is still the same senseless, vulgar practice, to be shunned by every man of decency and character.

3. Profaneness is *destructive of all religious feeling*. Man has something to do in this world with religion. He was made for it, and he needs it. He cannot safely dispense with its influence upon character; much less can he dispense with its obligations, its privileges, and its hopes. If he is any thing more than the insect of a day, he must regard religion. Nay, if he is to live only in this world, "godliness is profitable to all things; and has the promise of the life that *now is*." As things really are, religion is man's great interest; the thing about which he should be chiefly concerned. Most men acknowledge this to be so. Irreligious men promise to give religion their attention before the close of life. But profaneness disqualifies him who indulges it for

sober attention to religion. He trifles habitually with all that is grand, and impressive, and awful in religious truth; with the name and the character of God, and with the retributions of eternity. He thus undermines or dissipates that natural reverence toward the Supreme Being which is the foundation of all true religion. How shall he love and honor Him whom he has been accustomed to treat with contempt? How come to Him in solemn prayer, whose name he has used with every trifling jest, with every angry feeling? How shall he fear Him, whose judgment he has challenged on every slight occasion, for himself or others? How worship Him whom he has despised? With respect to religious impressions, the habitual swearer is well-nigh hopeless.

4. Profaneness is *eminently conducive to other sins.* It sears the conscience. Though entered upon with no apparent motive, it is continued often for the sake of its hardening influence; because it *drowns conscience,* and emboldens the soul for other sins. It is rapidly progressive. One oath leads to another, until swearing becomes a second nature, so that the

most accustomed swearers, those whose lips seldom open without an oath, and whose language causes one's very flesh to creep, are hardly conscious of uttering a single oath. Thus does the mind become hardened and brutalized. This is illustrated in the progress of youth in this sin. It is pre-eminently a corrupting practice. It spreads contagion on every side. Profaneness removes the only efficient moral restraint from the mind that indulges it, viz. the *fear of God.* No profane swearer fears God: and what vice or crime will that heart shrink from, which has become insensible to the fear of God!

Moreover, profaneness, as we have seen, being essentially vulgar, excludes him who is addicted to it from the best society and influences; disposes him to consort with those like-minded with himself; to live in the midst of wickedness, and to live there without restraint. It has been strikingly remarked, that "the profane person carries with him the label of rejection; the mark of outlawry from virtuous society; a label voluntarily worn; a mark branded by himself."—Such a man is ripe for

any wickedness. The youth who timorously utters his first oath opens upon his soul the floodgates of vice and crime. Profaneness blunts the moral susceptibility, and is a source of corruption to the whole character. "The tongue defileth the whole body."

5. This sin is *peculiarly odious and insulting to God.* What could be more so? Ridicule and contempt are the highest insult you can heap upon an individual. There is no man living who would not resent such an indignity put upon the name and memory of his own father, as the swearer is accustomed to offer to the name of God. But the word of God, the people of God, the institutions of God, and more than all, the name of God, are subjected to the grossest indignity by His creatures. Men of the least sense of decency, will restrain their vulgarity, their levity and their vileness in the presence of those to whom they know such exhibitions to be offensive. And yet they will speak of the omnipresent God with ribaldry and blasphemy.

Reverence for God is founded in the very nature of things. It is the dictate of natu-

ral religion. It is one of the first, and the highest of all moral duties. It grows out of the very relation of a creature to his Creator. Who can conceive of the infinite and eternal God—the maker of the heavens and the earth, the former of his own body and the father of his spirit,—the being who controls all things, who dispenses life and death according to His pleasure—who makes the winds and the waves obey Him, who sets fast the mountains, who shakes terribly the earth, before whom angels are as nothing, and the nations of the earth are like a drop in the bucket, or the small dust of the balance,—who I say can form any just conception of such a being and not stand in awe of Him? But the profane swearer treats that dread Being with contempt; uses His name thoughtlessly; associates it with every thing ludicrous and vile; and calls upon God, —shall I utter it?—as he would call upon a *dog*.

These insults are leveled directly against the Supreme Being. Such a use of His name, presupposes the destruction of all reverence for Him in the mind of the speaker, and the substi-

tution of feelings of indifference, of defiance, or of contempt.

God feels Himself to be insulted by such treatment. He has annexed a fearful threatening to the prohibition of profaneness.—"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." He will visit him with awful displeasure. This law was given at Sinai, amid thunder and fire and smoke. Conceive of a man mocking Jehovah there! Again He says, "Ye shall not swear by my name falsely; neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God; I am Jehovah."

Our Savior has taught us to pray, "*Hallowed be thy name.*" The name of Jehovah should be cherished with the deepest reverence. He who takes that name in vain, insults his Maker, and brings the curse of the Almighty upon his soul.

Such is the practice of profane swearing. Unnatural, unmanly, unreasonable, useless, vulgar, hardening, debasing, guilty and ruinous. It is no light matter to utter an oath. You may regard it as a mere passing breath; but a breath

may tarnish the polished metal, may efface the delicate impression of the features, may turn the nicely adjusted balance, may carry with it contagion and death.

It remains for me now, to say a few words touching the sin of *Sabbath-breaking*. This topic may be disposed of more briefly than the former.

"The Sabbath was made for man:" to invigorate and refresh his faculties by repose; to cultivate the kindly domestic affections; and to elevate the intellect and the heart by the worship of God, and by meditation upon His truth. But it depends wholly upon the use of the day whether it proves a blessing or a curse. To spend it as a mere day of recreation, is not only to lose some of its most important benefits, but also to defeat its appropriate influence upon the physical system. A change in the mode of occupation, a temporary relaxing of the tension with which the mind has been held to one subject, a season of comparative repose, though not of absolute inactivity, often does more to restore the tone of the nervous

system, to promote the health both of body and mind, than the most boisterous mirth, or than any of the usual modes of pleasure-hunting. This is a fact important to be understood. It is not labor, not useful and instructive occupation alone, that wearies; scenes of pleasure, devices for mere animal enjoyment, may weary also. These often prove more destructive to health than the former. A change in the mode of employment, the diversion of the mind from the *one thing* that commonly occupies it, a resort to conversation or an entertaining book, to music or some innocent amusement, will do more to freshen the jaded spirits, than excursions or parties got up for pleasure, which only renew excitement under another form, and thereby increase fatigue.

Young men, closely confined to business through the week, sometimes losing both their meals and their rest, have need of a Sabbath. They perceive the benignity of such an institution in a temporal view. They welcome 'the blessed Sunday' as a mere respite from toil. But unless they have brought their minds into full sympathy with the design of the day, and

have learned the most salutary method of employing it, they are apt to make it a day of recreation and of animal pleasure. I do not wonder at this: for a mind which is not at peace with itself, which has no great balance-wheel of Christian principle to regulate its movements, which cannot come back from the hurry of business to calm thoughts of God, which is incessantly driving after some selfish end, stimulated by the clamor and the competition of the world; such a mind will suffer from *ennui*, or what is worse, from self-reproach, if it is left for a day unoccupied. And therefore those who are daily living for the world, must on the Sabbath live for it more intensely, though under other forms. They cannot sleep away the entire day of rest; they cannot enter into its high and holy pleasures, so calm yet so exhilarating, so thrilling yet so refreshing, so pure and so abiding. No; as mere animals, they must seek the pleasures of sense. A stormy Sabbath is a dull day to them; they are continually saying, "Oh! what a weariness is it! when will it be gone?" On a bright day, they can go to Hoboken, to Fort

Hamilton, to Harlem, to High Bridge, to Staten Island—where perhaps they will compromise with conscience, by attending once at church; to Greenwood—where they can be very pious among the tombs; and in the season, they can go to Coney Island, and enjoy the luxury of sea-bathing, or take an "excursion" on the salt water. Yet even this at length becomes a dull routine. I leave it to any candid young man, who is accustomed to spend the Sabbath in this manner, to say whether he is either profited or satisfied.

Now it is worthy of remark, that communities or individuals which make the Sabbath a mere gala-day, are seldom prospered. They become morally corrupt, enervated, luxurious in their habits, and finally degenerate and bankrupt, socially and economically.

The young man who violates the Sabbath becomes reckless in his expenditures, fond of vain and costly amusements; eager for any thing that will fill up the vacuum in his time and in his mind. He falls into evil company. It cannot be otherwise. The good do not violate the Sabbath. Those who fear God

and keep His commandments, spend the Sabbath in His service. The Sabbath-breaker who visits the favorite resorts of Sabbath-breakers, must meet there the spendthrift, the jockey, the godless, the profane, the wanton, the vile: with these he must herd—breathing the same air, and following the same pleasures, till he comes at length to partake of the same spirit.

Young men, after a few months residence in the city, grow so much wiser than their parents in the country, that they regard it as a foolish whim in a mother, that she begged her son on leaving home always to keep the Sabbath, and a piece of Puritan cant in a father, that he enjoined it upon him never to forsake the house of God. But in deliberately breaking the Sabbath, many a young man has taken the first step in a career of infamy and crime.

The course of such a young man is generally as follows. He begins by occasionally absenting himself from church on the Sabbath. For this it is easy to find some plausible pretext, such as that he is weary or sick, or that he does not like the preacher, or, if he is a stranger,

that he has no associations with any particular place of worship, and cannot decide where to go. But staying in one's room is a dull mode of spending the Sabbath for one in such a frame of mind. Accordingly he goes out to walk for exercise and recreation; and when he has had enough of this, he will lounge about public places or at the corners of the streets, or will seek the society of those who are engaged like himself in killing time; and thus he goes on, till attendance at church becomes the exception instead of the rule, and till the Sabbath becomes pre-eminently the day for sensual pleasure. Thus Sabbath-breaking leads to vice and crime.

A careful inquiry in our several state-prisons has shown, that in a vast majority of cases, the course of crime dates from the act of Sabbath-breaking.

"Of one hundred men committed to the Massachusetts State Prison in one year, eighty-nine had lived in habitual violation of the Sabbath and neglect of public worship."

"A gentleman in England, who was in the habit, for more than twenty years, of daily

visiting convicts, states that, almost universally, when brought to a sense of their condition, they lamented their neglect of the Sabbath, and pointed to their violation of it as the *principal cause* of their ruin."

"Another gentleman, who has had the charge of more than one hundred thousand prisoners, and has taken special pains to ascertain the causes of their crimes, says that he does not recollect a single case of capital offence where the party had not been a Sabbath-breaker. And in many cases they assured him that Sabbath-breaking was the first step in their downward course." *

No reforming influence in connection with prisons has been found so salutary as the Sabbath school. It is the voluntary testimony of a prefect of police in Paris, that commitments for crime have greatly decreased since the institution of a Sabbath school in his district.

A young man who has been religiously educated, must have a great struggle with himself before he can break the Sabbath; and

* Sabbath Manual.

when at length he does break it, he deliberately puts God's authority under foot, and tears himself away from those moral influences which are so important to salvation. And who shall then say what will become of him?

"A distinguished merchant, of extensive observation and experience, and who had gained an uncommon knowledge of men, said, 'when I see one of my apprentices or clerks riding out on the Sabbath, on Monday I dismiss him. Such a young man cannot be trusted.'

"A father, whose son was addicted to riding out for pleasure on the Sabbath, was told that if he did not put a stop to this practice by his authority, his son would be ruined. But instead of requiring his son to desist from it, he sometimes set the example of riding out for pleasure himself. His son became a man, was placed in a responsible situation, and intrusted with a large amount of property. Soon he was a defaulter and absconded. In a different part of the country he obtained another responsible situation, and was again intrusted with a large amount of property. Of that he

defrauded the owner, and fled again. He was apprehended, tried, convicted, and sent to the state prison. After years spent in solitude and labor, he wrote a letter to his father, and after recounting his course of crime he added, '*That was the effect of breaking the Sabbath when I was a boy.*' "*

Oh young man, child of Christian parents, thy father and thy mother knew full well the import of their counsel when they enjoined it upon thee to keep the Sabbath. They knew that the Sabbath was a strong high wall, yea a wall of fire, guarded by the cherubim and by the thunders of almighty God, between thy soul and death; and that if thou shouldst overleap that wall, thou wouldst roll and plunge far down the depths of sin, beyond their reach, beyond their cries, rolling and plunging to the lowest deep of hell. Alas! poor mother, thou hast enjoyed the service of the sanctuary, and the evening prayer and hymn, and having commended thine absent son to God, thou wilt lie down in peace; but didst thou know where this thy son has been to-day,

* Sabbath Manual.

didst thou know what language he has uttered, what company *he* has kept, whom thou didst offer up to God when he lay so innocently in thine arms, what agony would wring thy soul, what tears would wet thy couch to-night! Sleep on, fond mother, undisturbed. I would not break thy slumbers by the vision of thy erring, guilty son. Let him visit thee in dreams only as the smiling infant in thine arms, or as the fair-haired boy upon thy knee: better that thou shouldst be sleeping in the grave, than see him as he is now—the companion of fools, of harlots and of miscreants, living in open profanation of the Lord's day.

The violation of the Sabbath, like the sin of profaneness, is a direct insult to Jehovah. It is an act of irreverence and of contempt for His authority. Thus these two sins are yoked together; and the weight of them, like a millstone, will drag the soul to perdition.

To avoid these dreadful sins and their dreadful issue, there is one and only one method:—to cherish deep in the heart reverence for God, for His being, for His majesty, for His holiness,

for His law, for His name, for His day. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The fear of the Lord—devout reverence for that supreme, incomprehensible Jehovah—that great I AM who made you, and who holds your breath in His hand. Shall you not fear Him? Think how He appeared on Sinai when He gave forth this law. Think how He will appear, when He shall come to execute its penalty. Have you no reason to fear God? I remind you how He cast down Lucifer like lightning from the skies; and I warn you to fear Him. I remind you how He holds the rebel angels in chains and darkness "unto the judgment of the great day," and I warn you to fear Him. I remind you how He swept the earth with a deluge; and I warn you to fear Him. I remind you how He rained down fire on the cities of the plain; and holding them up for an example, I warn you to fear Him. I point you to the mount that burned and quaked beneath His tread; and I warn you to fear Him. I point you to the threatenings of His word; and I warn you to fear Him. I remind you of the judgments which you your-

self have witnessed; and I warn you to fear Him. I bid you look forward to the day of death; I and warn you to fear Him. I bid you look forward to the day when He shall come in clouds to judge the earth; and I warn you to fear Him. Yea, *fear Him who hath power to cast you, soul and body, into hell.*

Would you be willing to die with curses on your lips? Would you be willing to confront your Maker whom you have blasphemed? Yet this you may be called to do at any moment. To borrow the illustration of another, God's nearness to you is as if you were yourself standing behind a curtain, and should hear persons upon the other side vilifying your character, and should suddenly raise the curtain and confound them by your presence. God has only to draw aside this veil that now hides the future from your view, and you will stand in the awful presence of Him whose name you have so lightly esteemed. You may trifle with the most solemn realities now; but it will be quite another matter for you who are so ready to call upon God to damn your soul, to hear *Him* say, DEPART, ACCURSED, INTO EVERLASTING FIRE!

LECTURE V.

LIVING FOR PLEASURE.

ECCLESIASTES XI. 9.—*Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*

YOUTH is the season of hilarity. We love to look upon the bright, happy face of childhood; upon the sports and the pastimes of youth; upon the contentment, and I had almost said, the recklessness, of those who know nothing by experience of the sterner realities of life. Freedom from care, freedom from responsibility, freedom almost from thought itself, present at times a pleasing picture. And yet the pleasure is tinged with melancholy, when we reflect how fleeting is the vision, and how soon it must be exchanged for scenes of toil, of conflict, of disappointment, of suffering, and of death.

The problem of life is to many a mystery. Various solutions of it have been attempted, but seldom with a satisfactory result.

A few look upon life as a school for mental and moral culture, and as a field for benevolent action. They are not indifferent to present enjoyments. They are diligent in business; they bear their part in public affairs; they are faithful and happy in the several domestic duties and relations; they enjoy the beauties and the fruits of nature, and the monuments and productions of literature and art. But they live mainly in the future. They consider themselves placed here upon trial; and whatever they do has reference, either in the principles on which it is conducted, or in its ultimate aim, to another state of being. The formation and development of a perfect moral character: the thorough discipline of the mind and the heart; the advancement of knowledge and of virtue among men; the honoring of God and of his government; the securing of eternal blessedness in a future state; these are the objects to which, in the view of such, every thing else should be made subordinate.

They consider this life as but the "dawn," the "vestibule" of their being. Hence the great question with them is, "how to *improve* life," rather than "how to *enjoy* it." In fact, it is only while they are conscious of making a right improvement of life, that they can really enjoy it.

They feel that life is for use; for personal improvement, and for beneficent action toward others. Every thing else, however important in its place, is only incidental;—the mere business of keeping alive in order that the great object of life may be attained. Such is the Christian's view of life; the view expressed by Paul, when he says—"The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God;" and also, "For me to live is Christ."

There is another class, much more numerous, who also live mainly in the future, but in a far different sense. These are such as look forward to the attainment of a given object for the consummation of their desires. The accumulation of so much property; elevation to such a post of honor; the completion of

such a work of usefulness or of fame; the acquisition of so much knowledge, and of so much reputation, preparatory to the dignified ease of literary retirement; these and kindred objects are with a large class the goal of life. For these they are willing to toil, and to undergo privation. They live on *hope*. Life, with them, is yet in the future; they are preparing to live; getting ready the means and appliances of living. They enjoy something of life in passing, but have little leisure for enjoyment now. Indeed, they look upon present enjoyment as so much subtracted from the future, if it delays in the least the accomplishment of the favorite plan. They resemble the man of business upon a journey, who, while hurrying from place to place, catches occasional glimpses of the beauties of nature, but who dares not pause for one moment to enjoy them, lest the main object of his journey should thereby suffer detriment.

With the mass of mankind life is a drudgery. Compelled to toil for a bare subsistence, and often denied even that; without the joys or even the comforts of home; the dearest re-

latives a burden and a grief, because they have claims for support which cannot be met; with no prospect of essentially bettering their condition; and with no intellectual or spiritual life, to raise them out of the region of physical discomfort—these drag out a weary and miserable existence, little above that of the brutes themselves.

Life to them, and life as often seen in them, is a painful and an inexplicable mystery; a life without any apparent comfort, or use, or pleasure, or even hope. If they have any pleasures, they are merely animal. This is not true, however, of the masses in our own country, nor in any country where Christianity dispenses its full light and power. The poor who are cheered by the consolations of the Gospel, are often most blessed.

The reverse of all this is life as viewed and illustrated by a fourth class. With them life is synonymous with pleasure. Accordingly, pleasure is to be seized upon and sought after on every occasion. They live for to-day. To-morrow is left to care for itself; and the more distant future seldom comes within their

field of vision. They resemble those who travel for pleasure only. This is their occupation; and they look with pity and contempt upon the drudging masses around them, or the hurrying throng that jostle them out of the way.

Their mottoes are, "Live while you can;" "Take the world easy;" "Don't borrow trouble;" "Begone, dull care."

Some of this class are in circumstances that place them above the necessity of doing any thing for their own support. They test the proverb, "Money answereth all things." With abundant means of enjoyment, they make enjoyment the sum of life. They have nothing to live for but pleasure; for the motives that govern the Christian, even in his abundant prosperity, have no influence with them.

Others, who take the same view of life, are nevertheless compelled to labor, in order to procure the means of leading a life of pleasure. These do not, like a former class, lay up in store for the future; but they take the world as they find it, and spend as they go. Present means procure present enjoyments; and the

future may provide for itself. The only thing, in their view, that money is good for, is to purchase pleasure; and the sooner, therefore, it is exchanged for pleasure, the better.

Disdaining to imitate the ant and the bee, which, during summer, lay up in store for the winter, they flit like the butterfly from flower to flower, leaving the sweets which they cannot sip, and sporting in the sunshine, as if flowers and sunshine would be perpetual. And when the cloud, and the storm, and the cold appear, they slink within doors to borrow a neighbor's artificial warmth, or they curl themselves up in a state of torpidity, till the sun smiles again.

Such is a brief outline of human life, under different phases, and from different points of observation.

The speculations of philosophers and the dreams of poets cover a much wider range. Without attempting to enumerate all the varieties under which human life appears, I have sketched its prominent characteristics as seen in four principal classes; the religious man,

the worldly, driving man of business; the poor man; and the man of pleasure.

These have their several theories and modes of life, with few points in common, and leading to widely different results. Which is the wisest, the truest, and the best? Let us see if we cannot profit by the experience of others, and frame for ourselves a true theory of life.

The last of the views enumerated, is the favorite with young persons, and shall receive our special attention. The young are captivated with the idea of *a life of pleasure*. They feel that such a life is their privilege; that however becoming sobriety and circumspection may be in manhood, however momentous may be the responsibilities that await them, and however honorable an old age of usefulness, benevolence, and virtue, they have a present license to enjoy life after their own fashion, and to the fullest extent. "*Go it while you're young*,"* is their accredited motto.

* I might have hesitated to introduce this phrase into a sermon, but for the example of one whose taste in such matters none would venture to question. It was once my privi-

1. A life of pleasure recommends itself to the *propensities* of youth. Man, in common with the whole animal creation, possesses instincts which prompt him to the various forms of sensual gratification. But, as I remarked in my lecture on intemperance, those instincts which in the inferior animals are to a considerable extent self-regulating, in man are left to the government of reason. The animal goes spontaneously, without experience, instruction, or deliberation, in quest of its proper food; and having satisfied its wants, it rests contentedly until the appetite returns. In like manner, "animals are unerringly directed to do spon-

lege to hear from Rev. Dr. Bacon, of New Haven, a sermon to young men, from the portion of Scripture which is prefixed to this discourse—the text having been proposed to him by a youthful criminal then about to be executed for murder. The first part of the verse was shown to convey ironically the very sentiment of the modern phrase just quoted. To my recollections of that discourse, I am indebted in part for the distinction which follows between the instinct of animals and the reason of man; though at the distance of three years, my recollections of an unpublished sermon are so indistinct, that if I have adopted the language as well as the reasoning of another, I have done so unconsciously.

taneously whatever is necessary for the preservation of the individual or the continuation of the kind."

"We see," says a distinguished physiologist, "animals providing against the approach of winter, the effects of which they never experienced, and employing various means of defence against enemies they have never seen. The parent consults the welfare of the offspring she is destined never to behold; and the young discovers, and pursues without a guide, that species of food which is best adapted to its nature." *

The bee constructs its cell, and the beaver its dam, according to strict mathematical principles. All the inferior orders of sentient beings, birds, fishes, beasts, and reptiles, have the same faculty, prompting them by an unerring impulse, to the performance of those actions, and of those only, which are necessary for their own preservation and that of their species. It is remarkable that these animal instincts appear to know their own limits. Seldom do any of the inferior animals eat to

* Roget.

surfeiting; in fact it may be questioned, whether what seems to us to be voracious and excessive eating on the part of certain animals, and which leads us to make them the prototypes of gluttons, is any thing more than the satisfying of their actual capacity for food. Moreover, all the lower orders of the animal creation, avoid instinctively food that is not suited to their nature, and especially intoxicating drinks. Though their sensitive existence appears to be circumscribed within the perceptions of the moment, and their voluntary actions have reference chiefly to objects which are present to the sense; yet within these limits the operations of instinct appear to be complete.

In man the instincts are fewer in number, and less complete in their action than in the inferior animals. It is a remark of the physiologist just quoted, that "while the delicate perceptions of the lower animals teach them to seek the food which is salutary, and avoid that which is injurious, man alone seems stinted in his powers of discrimination, and is compelled to gather instruction from a painful

and hazardous experience." But man is gifted with a higher faculty, with reason, by which he can regulate his appetites, and hold in check his mere animal propensities.

In youth, however, those propensities are strong; they are developed long before the judgment is matured by experience. Certain appetites in man, unlike the instincts of other animals, increase in proportion as they are gratified. Other artificial appetites also are formed by degrees, and become at length a second nature. The susceptibilities of youth are quick and lively; at this period, the sensuous nature predominates over the intellectual and the moral, and hence its impulses are often followed without a thought of the consequences. Parental restraint, the experience of others, and above all, the counsels of the word of God, are here interposed to counteract the influence of appetite, and to prepare the soul for a higher range of acts and exercises than those pertaining to the gratifications of sense. Where these teachings and restraints are wanting, the young man goes forth into the

world, according to the metaphor of Scripture, like "a wild ass's colt."

Not unfrequently, too, these restraints are felt to be irksome; and the ardent youth pants to be released from leading-strings, and to essay his own wisdom and strength. When intrusted to himself, forgetting the counsels of parental wisdom and piety, he launches forth upon the sea of life, without chart, or compass, or helm, with pleasure on his prow, and the laughing Hours painted on his canvas.

2. This natural fondness of youth for a life of pleasure, is encouraged by many of *the maxims of the world.* I have already said that there is a large class of society who live for pleasure only; and that a still larger class live for pleasure prospectively. The example of all these goes to encourage, in the minds of youth, the feeling that pleasure is the great *desideratum* in human existence.

How common it is, too, with all classes, to admire and envy those who have nothing to do but to enjoy themselves; and to regard an individual as "doing well" in the world, in proportion as he is free from vexations and

cares, or as he is accumulating the means of future enjoyment.

The temptations of the world, the devices by which the appetites are inflamed and pandered to, the forms of pleasure that abound in city life; these all incite young men onward in the path to which their nature is already prone.

The voyager to Europe in one of the splendid packets that now ply between this port and Liverpool, in mid-ocean may have almost every whim of his palate gratified from the well-stocked larder. So with the youthful voyager of life; he is not out at sea with hard biscuit and water, but with the luxuries of every clime spread to tempt his appetite, and every vessel he hails, and every port he makes, adds to the variety and richness of his store. It is said that a youth who had been sent to Boston to be educated, was permitted to run up a bill of $2000 in a few months, at one of the first hotels, for liquors and cigars.

3. The doctrine of living for pleasure is sanctioned also, *by the philosophy of materialists, of infidels, of novelists in general,*

and of such authors as young men are apt to be conversant with. The Epicurean school is not yet extinct. Its disciples are doubtless more numerous now than in the time of its founder. Multitudes there are who in theory or in practice make pleasure the chief end of life, and the standard of all virtue, and who find that pleasure, not as the father of the school proposed, in a sort of intellectual quietism, but in the gratification of the sensual appetites; who throw aside all fear and restraint, and say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Such sentiments have been inculcated by writers of no mean reputation as scholars, and of no mean accomplishments as gentlemen. They are insinuated through the channels of poetry and romance, and are pictured in the glowing tints of imaginary life.

The reasoning of such philosophers is on this wise:

"If all the world
Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
Th' All-Giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised,
Not half his riches known, and yet despised."

But they forget what multitudes are pining in order that some may live in luxury, and also that,

> "Swinish gluttony
> Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
> But with besotted base ingratitude
> Crams, and blasphemes his feeder."

Thus,

> "Under fair pretence of friendly ends,
> And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
> Baited with reasons not unplausible,
> They wind into the easy hearted man,
> And hug him into snares." (*Comus.*)

Some of the most popular modern works of fiction, and even that large class of works which profess to unravel the mysteries and to expose the miseries of life in the great cities of the world, possess their chief interest for the youthful mind, in those intoxicating scenes of sensual pleasure, which are introduced for contrast or embellishment.

4. Nor must I omit to say, in this connection, that *the false aspect under which religion is sometimes presented* to the youthful mind, repels that mind to the opposite extreme of

sinful pleasure. In the commonplace books of all Christians, it is written, that religion is the source of the highest enjoyment to man; but it is not always so written in their lives, or on their countenances. Religion is too often seen under a sour or gloomy aspect, like the asceticism of the hermit and the monk, or else it appears as a mere matter of cant. As thus presented, there is nothing cheerful nor lively about it; nothing that lays hold upon the sympathies of our nature; that speaks to the soul which is thirsting for happiness with the assurance that this is what it needs. But declaim as you will upon the vanity of earthly pleasure, compel reason and conscience to assent to all your dogmas about the follies, and temptations, and delusions of the world, you never will persuade the heart, and especially the young heart, to renounce worldly enjoyments, till you offer it some higher and more substantial good in their stead. An acrid piety, a sour, morose, censorious spirit in a Christian, does much to prejudice against religion those whose follies it condemns, and to fix them be-

yond the reach even of more genial and hopeful influences.

Under these and kindred agencies are youth led to devote themselves to a life of pleasure. They have strong natural impulses in that direction; too strong for their untried judgments to resist; impulses which can be guided and restrained only by parental wisdom, by wholesome instruction, by good social influences, and by the powerful motives of religion.

And with these strong propensities, and often with a very imperfect moral training, they are ushered into a world of temptation, where every thing is adapted to excite their passions, to flatter vanity, to pander to lust, and where every thing wears a false lustre, or a gaudy coloring; they are surrounded by evil examples; they meet with many who are accomplished in the various arts of enticement; they come into contact with philosophy under the garb of pleasure, and with religion under a cold and repulsive mien; and what wonder is it that they betake themselves to a life of pleasure as their chief good?

2. But though their course is not surprising, it is none the less *irrational* and *dangerous*. Let us briefly picture the career of such a youth. We will take a favorable case. He begins life, we will suppose, under good influences. His parents set before him an example of industry, of economy, of affection, of sobriety, of order, of sincerity, of benevolence, and even of piety. His education is watched over with a jealous eye; the principles of virtue are instilled into his mind; every corrupting bias is guarded against; and the selfish and groveling tendencies of his nature are checked, and as far as possible counteracted, by kind and judicious discipline. But the innate fondness for mere sensitive enjoyment, so strong in every youth, is not and cannot be subdued. Neither is it desirable that it should be annihilated, but only made subordinate to the higher ends of life.

Parental example is not, after all, so perfect, nor parental watchfulness so complete, but that the ingenuity of youth will find some mode of indulging its wayward desires. Through the school, or through some casual associate,

through some stray volume, or even through a newspaper, ideas of a different world from that of home will creep into the young lad's mind; his imagination will picture pleasures which he is denied, and his heart will burn with impatient desire for the forbidden fruit.

At first he will but occasionally tease his parents for some liberty or gratification which he covets, and which other children are allowed; and when denied, he will console himself with the thought that he will one day be his own master. The great ambition of the child is to become a man, so that he may have the ability to do what he sees others doing. But while desire burns unchecked, and temptations multiply, and the knowledge of that forbidden world of pleasure increases, and its pleasures flit before his imagination and inflame his curiosity, and self-will grows more strong, it becomes harder and harder to submit to the regulations of the family, and to postpone the season of unrestrained enjoyment. At length he ventures to break over those regulations, either secretly or by means of deception. He steals away by night, tremblingly, cautiously,

to join the sports of ruder boys in the neighborhood, or to gratify his curiosity with a sight of some exhibition which he has seen advertised or has heard extolled. If he succeeds in this without detection, or without rebuke, he soon grows bold: he mingles more and more with evil associates; ventures with them to the theater and to other places of doubtful character; and becomes giddy with the cup of enchantment which he has barely sipped. Many an avenue of pleasure now opens before him, and many an enchanting vision now visits him in his day-dreams. Why should his parents wish to shut him out from such a bright, gilded world as this? With this growing passion for a life of pleasure, there springs up a distaste for the quiet enjoyments and instructions of home. In a few years the boy makes rapid progress toward the position of independence for which he aspires. He discovers that he is too old to continue in the Sabbath school; he begins occasionally to absent himself from church; though his beard is not yet grown, he doffs his round-jacket, and mounts his cane, and obtains an introduction to what

is called society; goes into gay company; is invited to parties; becomes acquainted with the other sex; feels fully competent to take care of himself; his father's commands are now austere; his mother's inquiries are impertinent; once it was enough if she did not know that he absented himself from home at improper hours or in improper company; now, it is no concern of hers where he passes his evenings. He respects her indeed; he would not intentionally wound her feelings; but he has a right to enjoy himself, and she knows nothing of the world; she has many whims and conceits; he "knows what he is about," and will "take care of number one."

He is now fairly in for a life of pleasure; parties, balls, routs; the opera, the theater, the saloon; pic-nics, rides, jaunts; these make up his daily occupations; the circle of his pleasures being limited only by the means which he can command through parental indulgence, or by his own forced application to business.

He becomes of age; but hardly needs to assert his independence of that authority which he has so long practically disregarded. From

mere folly and dissipation, he now runs into the grosser forms of vice; and nothing can arrest his downward career, but the hand of that Being whom he was early taught to reverence, but whom he has long since disregarded.

It is seldom the case indeed, that a child of truly pious parents runs such a career; for the children of such parents are apt to be influenced through life by the precepts and the example under which they are trained. Yet there have been such melancholy cases, even in the families of those who had a character for piety, and who were not negligent of the moral training of their children.

But when the parents themselves are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," and teach their children no better way, the lives of those children, especially if money is plenty, will be an incessant chase after pleasure.

Sometimes a youth is left an orphan at an early age; very frequently are youth sent away from home for instruction at a college, or for business in a city. In these cases the allurements of the world find little to oppose

their influence over the inexperienced mind. The unoccupied evening and the Sabbath day, are appropriated to pleasures under the name of recreations and amusements, which are often kindred to vice.

But let us look a little more narrowly at this life of pleasure, in its nature, and in its consequences. A life of pleasure, in the common acceptation of the term, is unworthy of the rational nature of man. The doctrine that we were sent into the world mainly to enjoy life, with such means as the world itself affords, is altogether false; for the true object of life is never attained, unless the major part of life is devoted to something useful, unless the main scope of life is toward the useful and the good. It was the design of a beneficent Creator that our existence in this world should be happy. This is apparent from our own physical and intellectual organization; from the structure of the world around us; from the institution of the family and of society; and from the provisions of the Gospel. But if God sent us hither mainly to enjoy life, (as men intend by that phrase,) then, it has

been aptly said, "He has been miserably disappointed of His purpose. Witness the pain, sickness, and sorrow; the want, danger, fear, and doubt; the oppression, injustice, and cruelty, which haunt man from the cradle to the grave. Witness the death, which with a thousand terrors and agonies closes our earthly career, and hurries us into eternity. . . . Moreover this doctrine (of living for pleasure) is directly subversive of our best interests both here and hereafter. The enjoyment always intended is that which is found in popularity, power, wealth, and sensual pleasure. All human experience has proved, all sober men have confessed, that the pursuit of these objects is not the pursuit of happiness; that the objects themselves have not happiness to give; and that the devotees to this pursuit have, even when most successful, been in all ages the victims of disappointment and sorrow." *

What are the elements of a life of pleasure? To eat, to drink, to dress, to visit, to game, to dance, to ride, to walk, to read the news, to keep

* Dwight.

a good horse, to go to the springs or the sea-shore, &c., &c. Think of this as the sum of the occupations of an intelligent and immortal mind!

But what are the consequences of such a mode of living?

"He that loveth pleasure," saith the Scripture, "is a *poor* man." He who is addicted to mere worldly enjoyment becomes poor in property, poor in health, poor in friends, poor in character, and poor in his immortal interests.

Young men of ample fortune may live freely, pursuing pleasure in every form, and may flatter themselves that there is no limit to their means of sensual gratification. But gold melts under the sun of pleasure, and "riches take to themselves wings and flee away." A fortune is easily squandered, and where no habits of industry are formed, where the sluices are open and there is constant drainage, with no filling in, the largest reservoir must at length run dry. Others who have not a fortune to begin with, will waste their earnings on the pleasures of a day. Of two young men beginning life under the same circumstances, the

one by industry and economy will in the end become independent, while the other by dissipation will always keep himself in the position of a clerk or an apprentice, and may at last sink into a vagabond.

Health too is invaded by an unbroken course of pleasure. There are certain laws, the observance of which is indispensable to the healthy action of both body and mind. But many of those laws, such as pertain to rest, to diet, to regularity, to temperance and the like, are violated in the routine of pleasure. The penalty is a broken constitution, chronic disease, loss of appetite through satiety, premature debility, and often an early grave. The indulgence of the appetite to excess, or at irregular hours, or with stimulating food and drink, and the frequent exhaustion of the nervous system by over-excitement at the ball or play, together with the exposure consequent upon late hours, will undermine the strongest constitution.

The lover of pleasure will be poor also in *friends*. Companions he will not lack at the outset of his career; parasites and flatterers will abound so long as he has the means of

rewarding their attentions. But as his funds diminish, his friends will decrease; and when he is in need of sympathy, it will be impossible for him to find it. Probably no disappointment to the man of pleasure is so keen as the discovery that his follies, not his merits, made him friends, and that in recovering from the one, he has lost the other. Yet so it is; truly has it been said, that "not one of those who stare at the butterflies while they are passing, will ask at night what is become of them."

He will be poor also in *character*. I have heretofore remarked, that character is a man's best property. It is that which alone he can retain through all the changes of life, and that alone of all earthly possessions which will retain its value in the future world. Character is formed by degrees; by years of studious conduct; by industry, honesty, temperance, virtue; by the keeping of God's commandments. But the man of pleasure takes no care of character; does nothing to establish a good character; throws away character for his sensual enjoyment, when the two are incompatible, and thus becomes a beggar in reputation, long

before his spendthrift habits reduce him to beggary in fortune. That man is utterly worthless who lives for no higher purpose than his own selfish gratification; who has no honorable and useful calling, and contributes nothing to the great sum of human happiness.

And he will be poor *in his consolations, and in his prospects for eternity.* It seems almost a mockery to speak of the consolations or the prospects of such a being for eternity. Yet there is an eternity for him. Though he has lived like the insect of a day, he shall not perish like an insect: though he has "renounced the rational character, and made animals his kindred, his peers, and his patterns;" yet his spirit shall not go downward like that of the brute into oblivion; he must live on beyond the grave. And what are his prospects for that future? He has wasted this life, which his vices have shortened, "in the toilsome pursuit of sensual gratification;" and now with a broken constitution, diseased limbs, and a palsied palate, the power of enjoyment lost, his soul shrunk and withered, he lies down to die, with nothing to rejoice over in the past,

with nothing to hope for in the future. Could the mode of life which he has here pursued be perpetuated there, his prospects would be gloomy enough, for he has long since lost his relish for such deceitful pleasures. He has worn out the excitability of his system, and the pleasures of sense are no longer pleasures to him.

A man of pleasure once had a hideous dream of the future world. He was ushered into the abode of lost spirits, and there found each employed without intermission in some frivolous pursuit which had occupied much of his attention here. One was dealing out cards, another throwing dice, another was playing billiards, and so on through the whole routine of empty pleasures. The visitor recognized there some of his former acquaintances, and endeavored to engage them in conversation, or to get them to show him the wonders of the place. But no; no one was at liberty to leave his place or his occupation for a moment. Each was fixed eternally as he then appeared. It was one of the most terrible visions of hell that ever gleamed across the brain of mortal. Tantalus

with insatiable hunger and thirst in the midst of abundance, Sisyphus, toiling to the summit of the hill with the rock that continually rolled back again, were to be envied in comparison with these miserable drudges, doomed to keep up the recollection of worn-out pleasures, by observing their empty forms. But even such a prospect, uninviting as it is, is denied to the man of pleasure. To him the future is one dread pall of darkness, which the eye cannot pierce, and through which no ray of hope can ever struggle.

3. Here comes in the doctrine of our text:—*the doctrine of accountability, and of future retribution.* "Go it while you're young," exclaims the giddy youth, as he launches forth upon the stream of pleasure, and gayly trips along the rocking boat; while parents, and teachers, and friends stand with downcast looks upon the shore. He sees only the gorgeous castle in the distant air; they see the rapids and the rocks that he is nearing. "Go it while you're young," cries the man of pleasure, eager for fresh companions and recruits; wishing to drown his own unavailing regrets, and to drive

away care; "Go it while you're young," half sigh, half sneer the worn-out debauchee and the withered hag, who are carried back for a moment to the pleasures which have long ago forsaken them. "Go it while you're young," gravely adds the skeptic, who looks upon life as a mere pastime. "*Go it while you're young*," comes the response in deep, sepulchral tones, from the oracles of God. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes:" take full license; live for pleasure; gratify every desire; fulfill all the lusts of the flesh; let the eye and the palate, and the warm impulses of the heart have unrestrained indulgence; live while you may, enjoy life in its season, take things easy—go it while you're young; "but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." If you will adopt the motto, do it understandingly. If you will make this the rule of your life, do it with a full knowledge of the consequences, and with a determination to meet them. If you will "sow wild oats," you must reap a harvest of

remorse and wretchedness. But who would lead a life of pleasure if such is to be its end? And knowing that such will be its end, who will suffer himself to be blinded by his own passions, or by the god of this world?

I confess that I have addressed you this evening with feelings of despondency. In warning you against dishonesty, intemperance, gambling, profaneness and Sabbath-breaking, I felt sure that I should carry with me the assent of the consciences and of the judgments of you all. But this evening my task has been more difficult. I have put myself in opposition to the warm desires of youth, to the deceitful charms of pleasure, and to the ever-present yet ever-varying attractions of the world. And I have nothing to offer you, but what to you appears the cold, dull service of religion. Could you be induced to embrace that service, you would desire nothing more. But I plead with you at great disadvantage, and I fear that I shall not be able to persuade you. Never did I so long for the power of a poet or a painter, that I might picture be-

fore you in glowing contrast the life of pleasure and the life of piety. But though I have not that power, let me at least spread out to your view, that magnificent series of allegorical pictures—"The Cross and the World"—upon which our own lamented master has left the traces of his hand in death.*

The first picture introduces us to two youths entering upon a pilgrimage—one to the cross, the other to the world.

"The eye of the beholder first strikes the bold termination of a chain of mountains, with craggy peaks lost in the clouds.

"The same lofty range is seen through the entire series.

"To the left, a straight and narrow path takes its way up a rugged gorge, down which there beams a silvery light from a bright cross in the sky. The path at first leads

* The late Thomas Cole, *facile princeps*, who died before this his greatest subject was completed. In delivering this discourse, I described these pictures from the vivid impression which they had made upon my own mind. Rather than attempt to recall what I then said, I prefer to adopt here the graphic and eloquent description of a friend of the painter, which is "made up from recollections of conversation with the artist, and from his own notes."

off through fields of real flowers, betokening the early part of the Christian life, neither difficult nor uninviting. In the distance a dark mist, hovering over the track, conceals from the advancing wayfarer the real difficulties of his journey, and betokens the sorrows which of necessity befall him. To the right, a gracefully winding way leads down into a gently undulating and pleasant vale. Stretching forward through delightful landscapes, it finally fades away, and leaves the eye to wander on to the dim pinnacles and domes of a great city. A golden light falls through an atmosphere of repose, and lends warmth, softness, and beauty, as well to crag and precipice as to the rich valley. By-paths, serpent-like, steal up upon the sunny slopes of the mountain, inviting the traveler to the enjoyment of the prospect and the coolness of the waterfall.

"Vegetation of unnatural growth, and gorgeous and unreal flowers skirt the borders of the way.

"At the foot of the mountain stands Evangelist with the open Gospel. A little in advance are the waters, symbolical of Baptism.

"Two youths, companions in the travel of life, having come to the parting of their road, are affectionately and earnestly directed to the shining cross. While one, through the power of truth, enters with timid steps upon his holy pilgrimage, the other, caught by the enchantment of the earthly prospect, turns his back upon Evangelist and the Cross, and speeds forward upon the pathway of the world."

Let us first follow the Pilgrim of the Cross on his journey.

"A wild mountain region now opens upon the beholder. It is an hour of tempest. Black clouds envelope the surrounding summits. A swollen torrent rushes by, and plunges into the abyss. The storm, sweeping down through terrific chasms, flings aside the angry cataract, and deepens the horror of the scene below. The Pilgrim, now in the vigor of manhood, pursues his way on the edge of a frightful precipice. It is a moment of imminent danger. But gleams of light from the shining cross break through the storm, and shed fresh brightness along his perilous and narrow path. With steadfast look, and renewed courage, the lone traveler holds on his heavenly pilgrimage.

"The whole symbolizes the trials of faith."

We turn now to the course of the Pilgrim of the World.

"The beholder looks off upon an expanse of tranquil water. On the right are the gardens of pleasure, where the devotees of sensual delights revel in all that satiates and amuses. Near a fountain, whose falling waters lull with perpetual murmurs, stands a statue of the goddess of Love. An interminable arcade, with odorous airs and delicious shade, invites to the quiet depths of a wilderness of greenery and flowers. A gay throng dances upon the

yielding turf, around a tree, to the sound of lively music. Near an image of Bacchus, a company enjoys a luxurious banquet.

"On the left is the Temple of Mammon, a superb and costly structure, surmounted by the wheel of Fortune. Beneath its dome, a curiously-wrought fountain throws out showers of gold, which is eagerly caught up by the votaries below.

"From the great censers, rising here and there above the heads of the multitude, clouds of incense roll up and wreath the columns of the temple—a grateful odor to the god. The trees and shrubbery of the adjacent grounds are laden with golden fruit.

"Far distant, in the middle of the picture, a vision of earthly power and glory rises upon the view. Splendid trophies of conquest adorn the imposing gateway; suits of armor, gorgeous banners, and the victor's wreath. Colonnades and piles of architecture stretch away in the vast perspective. At the summit of a lofty flight of steps stand conspicuous the throne and sceptre. Suspended in the air, at the highest point of human reach, is that glittering symbol of royalty, the crown. Between the beholder and this grand spectacle are armies in conflict, and a city in flames, indicating that the path to glory lies through ruin and the battle-field. To the contemplation of this alluring scene the Pilgrim of the World, now in the morning of manhood, is introduced. Which of the fascinating objects before him is the one of his choice is left

to the imagination of the spectator. The picture symbolizes the pleasure, the fortune, and the glory of the world."

Our next view is of the Pilgrim of the Cross at the end of his journey.

"The Pilgrim, now an old man on the verge of existence, catches a first view of the boundless and eternal. The tempests of life are behind him; the world is beneath his feet. Its rocky pinnacles, just rising through the gloom, reach not up into his brightness; its sudden mists, pausing in the dark obscurity, ascend no more into his serene atmosphere. He looks out upon the infinite. Clouds—embodiments of glory, threading immensity in countless lines, rolling up from everlasting depths—carry the vision forward toward the unapproachable light. The Cross, now fully revealed, pours its effulgence over the illimitable scene. Angels from the presence, with palm and crown of immortality, appear in the distance, and advance to meet him. Lost in rapture at the sight, the Pilgrim drops his staff, and with uplifted hands sinks upon his knees."

But where now is the pilgrim of the world?

"Desolate and broken, the Pilgrim, descending a gloomy vale, pauses at last on the horrid brink that overhangs the outer darkness. Columns of the Temple of Mammon crumble; trees of the gardens of pleasure moulder on his

path. Gold is as valueless as the dust with which it mingles. The phantom of glory—a baseless, hollow fabric—flits under the wing of death to vanish in a dark eternity. Demon forms are gathering around him. Horror-struck, the Pilgrim lets fall his staff, and turns in despair to the long-neglected and forgotten Cross. Veiled in melancholy night, behind a peak of the mountain, it is lost to his view forever."

Choose now, young man, your course for life and your destiny for eternity.

LECTURE VI.

VICE PROGRESSIVE.*

ISAIAH V. 18.—*Wo to them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope.*

THIS homely but striking metaphor illustrates the natural progress of men in sin. The prophet does not merely repeat the same idea with emphasis, but by the increased strength and boldness of his figure, he at once portrays an advanced stage of wickedness and suggests the law of progress by which it was reached. "Wo to them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope; that say, Let him make speed, and

* This lecture was originally delivered in the Tabernacle in August, 1846: it was published soon after, and passed through several editions. As it is still called for occasionally, rather than to publish a separate edition, I have chosen to incorporate it with this series.

hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it."

Some understand by "iniquity," here, *punishment* for sin, and apply the denunciation to those who draw down retribution upon themselves by despising repeated admonitions. But the language obviously describes the increasing boldness of men in *sin*. They sin at first little by little, till emboldened by their seeming impunity, they contemptuously defy Jehovah, saying, "Let him execute his judgment, that we may see it."

By "cords of vanity" are meant slender, attenuated threads, like the web of a spider: these at first may be easily broken, but by degrees they are twisted together till they acquire the strength of a cable. An ancient version of the passage conveys this idea; "Wo to those who begin to sin by little and little, drawing sin by cords of vanity: these sins grow and increase until they are strong, and are like a cart-rope." The same meaning is given in the paraphrase of the Rabbins: "An evil in-

clination is at first like a fine hair-string, but the finishing like a cart-rope."

The leading thought suggested by the text then is, *the progressive tendency of sin.* This thought is presented in the form of warning—*Wo* to them who having taken a few incautious steps, are hurried on in sin with accelerating strides! I shall enlarge upon it with particular reference to *young men;* for they as a class are prone to vices which strengthen rapidly by indulgence, and among them are to be found the most melancholy examples of a fatal progress in sin.

Let us then, by way of admonition, trace the career of a young man in vice; that we may see where and how he begins to go astray, and by what steps he is brought to the verge of ruin.

We will take the young man at that period of life when he becomes to some extent his own master. Early education not only gives a bias to the inclinations, but often does much to form the character for life. Some young men begin life for themselves in circumstances eminently favorable to a virtuous and honora-

ble career; while others must overcome all the influences of their previous education in order to take the first step in such a course. But the influence of early education upon the principles and habits of the man, and the responsibilities growing out of that influence, are topics for the consideration of parents and other guardians of youth rather than of young men themselves. On this point volumes of tragedy might be written. That young man who is just reeling into a drunkard's grave, was first enamored of the ruby wine as it sparkled on his father's table; and now that father has turned him out of doors and will not own his name: that wretched young woman, whose only joy, whose very life is the wild excitement of the midnight revel, now lost to her mother, to society, to herself, was taught by that very mother to love the dance; was flattered into the conceit of her graces and charms;—and it was in the ball-room that she met her betrayer, and it was to flattery that she surrendered her virtue.

Alas! those triple cords which bind such burdens of guilt upon the young as to crush

them into premature decrepitude, are often made of silken threads and golden strands that were spun and twisted in the nursery and the parlor, by gay, fashionable, pleasure-loving mothers, and by purse-proud, mammon-worshiping fathers. While we delineate the young man's progress in vice, let parents ask themselves what they have done or may be doing to start their sons in such a career.

But our concern now is with young men. We take them as we find them in this great city ; some educated here from infancy, whether instructed in religion, and guarded from temptation with a jealous eye,—or made familiar by parental example with scenes of frivolity, dissipation and vice ; others having come hither from some quiet village and sacred home, to be suddenly thrown amidst excitements and dangers with no guardian but their own unpractised judgment ; others still having grown up without instruction or restraint amid the trials and exposures of orphanage ;—some who possess or anticipate the means of gratifying every desire, others who are constrained to toil for even a scanty subsistence ; some who

have been nursed in the lap of luxury, and others who have been rocked in an iron cradle;—from any or each of these classes we may select our example—the example of a young man, who, when left to himself, enters upon a vicious course of life, and makes gradual, certain, fearful progress toward its fatal end. We take him as he is becoming in some sense his own master; whether after a long tutelage he is just breaking loose from restraints which were growing irksome, whether he has early eluded parental vigilance or trespassed upon parental indulgence, or whether the necessities of his condition have early made him self-dependent, and therefore in feeling independent. Such a young man, ardent, generous, confiding, inexperienced, perhaps unwarned, or with curiosity awakened by warnings to see and try things for himself, comes forth into a world full of excitement, having yet to learn how to adjust the balance of his own excitable nature. Man's passions are not self-regulating, like those of the brute; they are to be controlled by reason. He alone is intrusted with the dignity and responsibility

of self-government. A brute may be pampered; but in their ordinary, healthy action, its appetites are regulated by its real necessities. Man is capable of almost unlimited excitement both of body and mind; and under the stimulus of pleasure may be tossed wildly upon the sea of passion unless reason or conscience is at the helm. In youth the dangers of that sea are all unknown; the gales that sweep over it are laden with spices; the wrecks that line its shore are hidden by the silvery foam; the giddy voyager launches out upon it, the strong impulses of his nature driving him on.

Oh! that is an anxious hour when a youth left to himself first encounters temptation. As yet he has not learned what measure of excitement is at once healthful, necessary and rational: he knows not how to regulate his physical and mental system so as to secure the highest enjoyment for life. Present pleasure, pleasure that will thrill his inmost being,—the keen excitement of gratifications continually recurring, continually augmenting, continually diversified, this is what his new-fledged appetites crave; and his first attempt at independ-

ent self-enjoyment is too often his first step toward self-destruction.

His exquisite sensations, as one desire after another fastens upon its object now brought within his reach, produce a new consciousness of life. His pleasure-weaving heart shoots out its desires like golden tendrils, to fasten on every luscious bait; threads to be broken in a moment if any thing unseemly is attached to them, and yet which elongate, thicken, intertwine, till with a cable's strength they drag a crushing weight of sin and sorrow after them, or drag the heart itself down to the depths of guilt and wo.

Long before the young man thus comes out into the untried world, imagination has been busy in depicting the pleasures of unlimited self-indulgence. Here, as with our first parents, the tempter still begins his work. In the rovings of a wanton imagination are scattered wide the seeds of vice. Here often a process of self-corruption is begun, long before the passions have been developed in their strength by outward means of gratification. Some school-boy jest, or tale, or dream, at

once indicates and excites those latent passions which make the future bacchanal and sensualist. The school-boy sees the circus-train marching gayly through the city. He hurries home, his imagination all alive with the promised entertainment—"Oh! father, can't I go to the circus?" "No, my son." He bites his lips, and inwardly resolves that he will go when he gets to be a man; and if he does not go without his father's knowledge, he feasts his fancy with such idle shows. The poor friendless news-boy, stands gazing on the flaming placard which announces that at some second-rate theater such and such wonders are to be exhibited on Christmas day or New-Year's eve. He pictures to himself the gorgeous scenery, the terrific battles, the grand display of kings and courts which may be witnessed for a shilling. He sighs to think he has but one solitary sixpence. He goes away to dream of what he has read till he can save or steal another so as to see it with his own eyes. The height of his ambition is to realize this fancied pleasure. Yes, my lad, you can go down into the pit

—for a *shilling;* but God grant that you may always feel too poor to pay even that.

Thus in early youth is the imagination filled with phantoms of pleasure, the realities corresponding to which are sought with a zest heightened by long anticipation and unwelcome restraint, when the young man begins to act for himself. What hideous forms of lust often fill the day-dreams and night-dreams of youth, I shall not here portray. There are darker chambers of imagery in many a youthful mind than those which Ezekiel saw, and they are filled with images more abominable than the idols of the house of Israel. How few have tasted that high beatitude,—"Blessed are the *pure in heart.*"

Imagination, designed to be the handmaid of virtue and of love, to shed a halo of light and peace over life with its cares and toils, becomes the mistress of lust, panders to the basest passions, stimulates impure desires, pollutes and degrades the mind within, long before the youth is exposed to the contaminations of vice from without. Here the first degrees

in vice are taken; here its slender but tenacious filaments are spun.

This process of self-corruption is facilitated in many instances by the perusal of immoral books. These ply the imagination when rendered morbid by its own excesses; sometimes they first tempt its illicit rovings. Such books are but a tissue of falsehoods. True in one sense to nature they may be, but it is to nature awfully depraved. Nor are they true to corrupted nature any farther than that the lowest scenes of vice which they portray have a reality; but that reality is here concealed under the drapery of fiction,—and the darkest passions are associated with the most virtuous affections. Sympathy is excited for the vicious as children of misfortune, rather than horror at their vices and crimes; nay, these are so apologized for as to have little that is repulsive in them. The glow of the author's imagination pervades his book, and makes a career of vice and crime a glittering pageant, or a thrilling tragedy, from whose fatal termination the mind is diverted by a splendid drop-scene and exhilarating music. The whole effect of such a

book is to lure on the already excited youth to the actual experience of that of which he has so long dreamed.

But what shall I say—can I say any thing—of the illustrations which often accompany such books—of pictures presenting to the eye what has already been woven upon fancy's screen; of professedly scientific and artistic delineations of beauty as seen in the *pirouettes* of a *danseuse*, or the voluptuous repose of the harem? These you will occasionally see half-exposed in shop windows; just enough to lure the passing youth without exciting his disgust; or they are offered you at the steamboat dock, —*very slyly*,—as if the vender was conscious of being engaged in a base transaction, and still had shame enough to wish to hide the want of modesty. Physiological science and the engraver's art are prostituted to the corruption of the young. Such books are sold or they would not be published; they are read or they would not be bought. They may be found in many a secret chest or drawer; they are read with the key turned, or in the night. And thus does many a youth make fearful pro-

gress in self-corruption, who yet lacks the courage or the opportunity to plunge openly into vice. The cords of iniquity are becoming more numerous and are twisting together. Works of the same general character, only less gross—the more dangerous because the more fascinating—are sometimes found upon the parlor table, having been purchased by an inconsiderate father, for the entertainment of sons and daughters who would blush at these mere hints of the arts of vice.

Associated with this debasing influence of immoral books is that of companions more advanced in wickedness. The formation of intimacies with evil men marks another step in self-degradation. The youth whose heart is predisposed to sensual pleasure, finds others of his own age who are familiar with all the means of sensual gratification, and who for the sake of companionship or some trivial favors, will introduce him to their haunts. Even the youth who has never read an immoral book, and who has scarcely harbored a vicious thought or inclination, is often thrown into the society of those to whose temptations he

falls an easy prey, because he is so ignorant of their devices. An unsophisticated youth who has been governed by his father's counsels rather than by his own tried principles, when thrown among vicious and artful companions, is in a most dangerous position. If in college, he is associated with young men from every section of the country, and of every variety of character—many whose early training has been widely different from his own; who are lavish of their money and loose in their sentiments—and yet he must be free with them if he would be an acceptable companion, and so he becomes assimilated to them in the attempt to make himself their favorite.

If in the manufactory or workshop, such a youth finds himself perhaps among a set of profane and dissolute workmen, to whose conversation, however disagreeable, he must be a constant listener. By degrees he becomes accustomed to their ribaldry and profaneness, so that they cease to shock him; he discovers that these men have some generous traits, that they appear to enjoy each other's society, have now and then a capital joke, and divers sports

into which he is yet uninitiated—on the whole that they are very "clever fellows;" and thus, from overlooking their vices, he comes to imitate them and to make them his own.

If a young man has wealth and leisure, his temptations are multiplied, for there are many watching to entrap and ruin him. He must appear generous, be free with his money, and his parasites will teach him how to spend it; the gentlemanly gambler will court his acquaintance and spread the net till he secures his prey.

The influence of evil company is commonly most marked and most deplorable in the case of a young man who has come from the country to the city in quest of employment. Such a young man has at first a painful sense of his inferiority to his brother clerks in dress and manners, and in all that contributes to make a city gentleman. They can say and do many fine things; can criticise this singer and that actor, and talk about their lady-loves in a strain that excites at once his admiration and his envy. They jeer him for his sobriety; invite him to smoke with them, and then laugh at the

nausea produced by his first segar. He is stung to the quick; he will not be singular; he will not be the butt of the store and the neighborhood; he learns to curl the exhilarating vapor as gracefully as they; and embraces the first opportunity to show them that he *can* utter an oath or a vulgar jest, though he shudders inwardly all the while. By and by they ask him where he spends his evenings, and kindly offer to relieve his ennui by taking him to various places of amusement, and introducing him into "good society;" they persuade him to drink a social glass and to join in an *innocent* game of cards. As he progresses, his uncomfortable feeling of inferiority vanishes; he is quite at ease among his associates; as to his old village companions, he is getting decidedly above them; and yet he does not feel that he has done any thing particularly objectionable. True, conscience does at times reprove him; and as he opened his trunk the other day he saw his *Bible* there—the Bible that his mother gave him—but he quickly tumbled it to the bottom, and has not thought of it since. His parents gave him much good ad-

vice; but they had never lived in the city, and knew nothing of what is expected of young men in order to appear genteel; his associates are all young men of respectability—perfect gentlemen; he is not becoming vicious; he would shrink from any thing degrading;—on the whole he is quite pleased with the improvement he has made since he left home. At length his companions, whose influence over him is daily increasing, propose to him to take a pleasure excursion on the Sabbath. He hesitates at this, for he has promised his parents to attend church on the Sabbath;—yet so he promised to read the Bible, and he has omitted that;—but he is confined closely through the week and needs some recreation; after all, his parents' notions of the Sabbath are old-fashioned—well enough in the country, but too strict and puritanical for the city;—besides, he is only going for this once, and will take care it does not become habitual. Thus he parleys with conscience till he silences her voice. *He deliberately breaks the Sabbath.* In so doing, he takes a greater stride in sin than he ever took before—he draws iniquity with a stronger cord.

His companions next propose that he shall visit the theater. He feels less hesitation about this because he has so often dwelt on theatrical scenes in imagination that his curiosity is excited by the least allusion to them, and he wishes to judge for himself what there is of good or evil in them. He needed but an invitation, the countenance of others, to overcome any remaining qualms of conscience. See now this youth for the first time entering the theater. He is completely bewildered; the lights dazzle; the music charms; the scenery entrances; the acting rivets his attention; he comes home ravished with astonishment and delight; reciting fragments of tragedy and envying those whose life is on the stage. He needs no invitation to go again: he is excited to the highest pitch; he has found what seems to him an inexhaustible fund of pleasure. Night after night he is earliest and latest at the play, drinking his fill of excitement;—and still he thirsts for more. Alas! poor youth, look back a few months to thy first arrival in the city; see how fast thou hast improved upon that simplicity of character of

which thou wast then ashamed. Verily thou art making progress—the cords are twisting thicker and thicker.

But there is yet hope for him, for he has not gone to that house which leads to death. Often as he has been tempted to it, the remembrance of a mother or a sister, perhaps some lingering recollection of the warnings of Scripture, has held him back from that act of self-degradation, from which nature in spite of her warmest passions instinctively shrinks. But alas! he is on his way thither—"as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life."

He has kindled within his breast a raging fever; he has begun to live for and by animal excitement, and where shall such a life end? The theater soon loses its novelty. He learns that its thrilling scenes are all a trick. If he would still find pleasure there it must be by help of the exhilarating cup and the conversation of mirthful companions. In such a frame he cannot long resist this last temptation. Those evil imaginations long festering within him now break out openly; he forgets his dis-

cretion; forgets his shame; forgets his home; curiosity and the thirst for new excitements, aided by the wiles of the tempter, prevail over every restraint, and he gives himself up a willing prey.

"At the window of my house I looked through the casement, and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, passing through the streets near her corner; and he went the way to her house, in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night; and behold, there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot and subtle of heart. . . . . With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway as an ox goeth to the slaughter." Ah! what strong cords are pulling him *now*. "None that go to her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life." Not that deliverance is absolutely hopeless, but the danger is most imminent; for, says a powerful writer,* "some may escape—

* Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

as here and there a mangled sailor crawls out of the water upon the beach, the only one or two of the whole crew; the rest are gurgling in the wave with impotent struggles, or already sunk to the bottom. . . The certainty of continuance in this vice is so great, that the chances of escape are dropped from the calculation, and it is said roundly *none that go to her* return again."

The last stage of vice in kind has now been reached. Nothing worse can be done than to sink deeper in the same species of infamy. For a while the young man, if possessed of means, will maintain the appearance of respectability, even in vice. He will drink only in the decorated saloon where *gentlemen* resort; he will visit only those abodes where pollution is decked with fashion and pillowed in luxury.

But these things, like the appurtenances of the theater, soon lose their charms. They were needed at first to hide the deformity of vice; now he has become so familiar with her features that he sees nothing repulsive in them. Excitement is all he asks, no matter how pro-

duced. His lusts are burning him up—and the fire must be fed, though it be with the scrapings of pitch. By degrees his heart has hardened till he is callous to shame. As the youthful surgeon or soldier who faints at the sight of blood, can learn to amputate a limb or to march over the gory field without betraying the least emotion, so he who shrinks from the *image* of vice as from the nightmare can learn to hug Vice herself to his bosom, and even to feel that he cannot live away from her. He plays at first with the loose and gayly-colored threads of her drapery, he twists them together in new and fantastic shapes for amusement, always forgetting to unwind them or to relax his hold, and thus he draws Vice nearer and nearer, till at length, with strange infatuation, he binds her to him as a part of his very self. Those silken threads have acquired the strength and roughness of a cable. He who sinned at first reluctantly, and by occasional temptations, now sins by force of *habit* and without temptation. He has made fearful progress in the art of silencing conscience and hardening his own heart. Yet conscience is

not finally silenced; her voice is sometimes heard—but it is a voice not of gentle remonstrance—but of stern, galling rebuke, which awakens remorse and the sense of degradation, and too often impels to deeper guilt. Here lies the hopelessness of the case—when that very sense of shame which was once the strong barrier against vice, having been overleaped, is found upon the other side to bar the return to virtue. Alas! poor youth, what cords now bind thee to thy sins; what a burden hast thou fastened round thy neck! Thou hast laid thy head in the lap of Delilah; thy strength, thy manliness, thy virtue, have departed; thy locks are shorn; thine eyes are out; thy false friends will bind thee now with fetters of brass, and thou shalt grind in thy prison-house; they that have betrayed thee shall mock at thy wretchednes, still thou shalt crush thyself and them in one common ruin.

Thus have we sketched the progress of a youth in vice; beginning in the corruption of his own imagination by the suggestions of the tempter, aided by evil books, moving on through evil company and places of vain, idle, vicious

resort, from the gay saloon and ball-room to the theater and gaming table and thence to the house of death, where he lies down besotted to rise no more. . . . . And now what is the *end?* This wretched, fallen young man is ready for the commission of any crime. Theft, forgery, murder, will, if necessary, supply the means to gratify his lust, or some bloody affray will give vent to his heated passions. "His fate is either a prison, or a total abandonment to low vice and villainy, terminating in premature exhaustion, disease, desertion, misery and death." Such has been the career of many a youth who began by indulging an evil imagination and was led on by lust. Seldom is there an instance of fraud or forgery on the part of a young man against his employer, which cannot be traced to a wish to obtain the means of licentious indulgence. Lewdness is the hotbed of crime. How often is the wretched female, seduced and abandoned, driven to suicide as a refuge from her shame! How often is the seducer called to answer for his crime in mortal combat! How often does *Murder* stalk forth from the foul den of harlots, seize on his vic-

tim, and then go back to their embrace with baubles bought with blood! How often does he lure his victims to that den! How often does he make her his victim who has fed his lust, lest she should unmask his features to one whom he would lead blindfold to the marriage altar! Whatever daring crime may be committed, the police resort at once to some well-known den of infamy, with a moral certainty of finding some trace of its perpetrators there. The vapors that exhale from these entrances to hell are worse than the miasma; they bear on their heavy wings the seeds of death.

This picture of the progress and end of a vicious life, is not a fancy sketch but a portrait; its leading features being taken from the life of one whom I knew for years, and whose end I have lately witnessed. This young man was the son of respectable and pious parents—yet living in the vicinity of New-Haven, Conn.,—who, having consecrated him to God in baptism, endeavored, it is believed, to train him up in the way of the Lord. Some ten years ago he was a pupil in the Sabbath school in which I was then a teacher. He was a

well-behaved youth, neither profane, idle, nor vicious; and as he grew up to manhood, he acquired a character for industry and sobriety. Occasionally, indeed, he fell into loose company, but was soon reclaimed by parental kindness and authority, so that till he became of age he was never openly vicious and seldom absent from his father's house at unseasonable hours. In short, his general deportment at this period would have compared favorably with that of the youth in any plain well-regulated household. About four years ago, when he was nineteen years of age, he began to attend on my ministry, and in the course of a few months, having entertained hope in Christ, he made a public profession of religion. Well do I remember my first conversation with him on that subject, and the serious and satisfactory narration which he then gave of his religious experience. He joined the church in June, 1843, and month after month came to the table of the Lord; he doubtless thought that he was truly converted, and he led for some time a life of apparent devotion. In about a year, however, it was noticed that he was

irregular in his attendance on public worship, and painful rumors of his delinquency reached the ears of his brethren, who could not watch over him strictly on account of the distance at which he lived. Having become of age, he had left his father's house, and was employed upon the railroad near by. Here he fell in with wicked companions—some of whom were already steeped in vice. He began to neglect his Bible and his customary seasons of devotion, and to suspect, what was probably the fact, that his religion had been more a matter of excitement than of principle. Away from Christian influences, surrounded by profane and licentious companions, he gradually became profane and licentious himself. These facts being ascertained by the church, every effort was made to induce him to return to his duty:—but whether through shame, or from a premature hardening in guilt, he refused to hold any communication with the church or to make any promise of amendment, and was therefore excommunicated.

It seems difficult to account for this sudden fall;—but it occurred substantially as follows

Returning from work one evening, he casually stopped for a moment by a house of evil resort, when his companions, who were familiar with the place, proposed that he should go in with them. At first he hesitated—but curiosity on the one hand and ridicule on the other overcame his scruples. He went, however, as a mere spectator, and as he saw at once the grossest forms of vice, he soon left the place in disgust, thinking that he would never enter it again. But alas! he knew not his own weakness. He had dallied with temptation. Had he remembered that lesson of the Sabbath school—*my son, if sinners entice thee consent thou not*—he would have stopped his ears against his tempters and have escaped for his life. But no; he would venture a little further; he would see for himself—confident of self-control. And what was the result? While he was disgusted he was inflamed. He had looked in at the gate of hell, and had taken fire before he could retreat. What he saw was but an exhibition of human passions—and *he* had passions that could revel in just such scenes. Every young man has such passions

in his nature—let him beware how he suffers them to be aroused. The moment he gives loose to them by a thought, a word, a look, he is set on fire of hell. "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" So was it with that young man:—he came away shocked in his moral sense, but excited in his passions; and he went again to that same den of infamy, of his own accord. In consenting to go there even from curiosity, he broke away from the most powerful restraints, and he was obliged at the first to plunge deep into the abyss, to quench the light of truth and grace that had burned within him from his earliest years. His parents sought him again and again, but obtained from him only promises of amendment which were never kept:—so infatuated, so lost did he become, that he preferred the society of debauchees and harlots to the social joys of a New England Thanksgiving.

He was cut off from the church in September, 1844.

Early in the following February, that quiet

law-abiding city was agitated with the rumor of a murder in the vicinity. A body was found upon the railroad track, a few rods north of one of the principal streets, with marks of violence upon it, and was soon identified as that of a young man whose parents lived within a stone's-throw of the place. While the Inquest is sitting upon the case, a young man presents himself and volunteers to give information touching the deceased; it is to the effect that he had seen him a few days previous, at which time he received his watch in part payment of a debt—for the balance of which he holds his note of hand. The note is examined, and on being compared with the handwriting of the deceased is seen to be a forgery. The young man, who is none other than the Sabbath school scholar and apostate church member whose career we have sketched, who has come thus boldly forward to shield himself from any suspicion which might arise about the missing watch, is taken in his own craftiness and detained upon suspicion. Embarrassed and alarmed at this unexpected turn of his manœuvre, he betrays his knowledge of

the murder by attempting to implicate three individuals successively either as principals or accomplices. These all, however, succeed in establishing their innocence. As his testimony thus recoils more strongly upon himself, he makes at length a full and circumstantial confession of the crime. The murdered man had been his companion for years, in the employment of his father, his own intimate friend and proposed partner in business. From him he had borrowed a gold watch, which he had bestowed upon a mulatto mistress to whose companionship he had sunk. The owner of the watch requested that it might be returned; this was impossible; and the borrower to hide his own baseness, resolved to take the life of his friend. He agreed to meet him on the railroad track on Sabbath evening to restore the watch; and at the appointed time was there with a common pike-pole in his hand—on seeing which his friend inquired in jest, if he meant to kill any body with it. They walk together up the road toward a little bridge, engaged in ordinary conversation. No words of anger pass between them; nor

does any thing occur to excite suspicion in him who is going as a lamb to the slaughter. He crosses the bridge a little in advance—steps down a gentle declivity,—when suddenly a well-aimed blow from his treacherous companion fells him to the ground. The iron prong sinks deep into the forehead. . . . .There is no cry, no motion, no sign of life, but it is buried in the brain again and again to make the work sure: then dripping over the snow, the weapon is carried down the bank, and plunged beneath the frozen stream. The murderer hurries from the spot, and passes, carelessly and unsuspected, through the heart of the city, to the den of infamy from which he came, stopping for a moment at the house of God. That night was spent with her for whom he had purchased a trinket at such a price.

Milton represents the sorcerer Comus as having power by his wand to change the nerves of his victims into stone, and then to make them subservient to his wishes. It would seem that the very sorcery of the pit had been practised upon this youth. His

moral sense was deadened; reason and conscience were petrified, while passion had full sway. Religious instruction, vows, professions, a father's warnings, a mother's tears, even the strong claims of friendship, these all were nothing. God followed him with admonitions till the very moment of his crime. The jest of his unsuspecting friend, as he handled the implement of death, was heaven's last warning against the tempter. He confessed that this almost unnerved him. How could he have had courage for the deed? Oh the infatuation of lust! *The harlot must have that watch, cost what it may.*

The wretched youth, in all his prison interviews and in all his correspondence with his friends, traced his ruin to that first going into the house of death. Of course he was found guilty of murder, though his trial was delayed several months; and the execution of the sentence was further postponed, that the Legislature, in which the pardoning power is vested, might review the case. He had a respite in all of seventeen months; but every effort to secure a commutation of punishment having

failed, justice at length took its course. . . . . Two weeks ago to-day I knelt in that murderer's cell, in company with his parents, sister, and brother, who had come for their last interview with him on earth. That narrow cell was more solemn than the grave itself. Two weeks ago to-morrow I saw the youth who had once been of my spiritual flock, upon the scaffold. It was an awful scene: it haunts me in my sleep; my heart sickens at the remembrance of it; and I shudder to speak of what I hardly dared to look upon. But awful though it was, it was not *cruel.* It was conducted with great dignity and propriety throughout. The officer who inflicted the penalty of the law evinced the deepest compassion for the criminal; yet he was supported in his painful duty by the unanimous sentiment of the spectators that the penalty was just. The scene was awful because sin is awful; for the same reason that it will be so awful to hear the sentence, "Depart, accursed," pronounced on any we have known and loved. His sins had dragged the criminal to the scaffold—sins which he had first drawn after him as with a

cart-rope from whose fatal noose there was no escape. Awful as it was, it was not so awful as the lone murder just described, not so awful as would have been the palliation of such a crime, or the exposure of life and the prostration of law by the mitigation of its penalty. Yet it was an awful scene, and in that very awfulness lies its moral effect. About a hundred persons, principally civil and military officers, are assembled in the yard of the prison, which is carefully screened from all without. The clear blue sky is over head—the bright sun is shining, but the air seems stifled, and men breathe heavily and slow. Upon a scaffold some ten feet high, stands the youthful criminal in the habiliments of death. The fatal cord—which has already launched two murderers into eternity—is swinging above him from a strong and well-supported beam. He makes a brief address; he hears a parting prayer; he bids adieu to those around; the knot is tied; the face is covered; the spring is touched; the trap falls; and all is ended. No; all is not ended—but we must leave him with his Judge.

YOUNG MEN! can you wonder that I feel for you, when I have witnessed such a scene? I know your dangers, for my own youth was spent in a great city, and I have sailed till my head was dizzy on the outer edge of that whirlpool where some of you may soon be struggling for your very life. Alas! the *dead* are there; and I come to you charged with a message from the dead. Do you say that this case is peculiar? I admit it. But *how* is it peculiar? Are you the son of pious parents? So was he. Have you been trained in the Sabbath School? So had he. More than this; he had thought that he was a Christian. The case is peculiar in that it shows that every moral barrier may be overleaped by lust; it warns every one who thinketh he standeth to take heed lest he fall.

Oh that you could have heard the warning of that wretched young man from the scaffold! "You know," said he, "how I was brought up, —I had the best instructions a Christian father could give;—oh! if I had followed them, I should yet have been over yon mountain in my dear father's home: but temptation led me

astray, and I have come to this. I hope now as I leave this world, my voice will warn all young men. Our desires and passions are so strong, that it requires a very little to lead us astray. I want to urge it upon all young men, never to take the first step in such a career as mine. When the first step is taken in the paths of sin, it is very difficult to stop." *His* "first step" was a desperate leap from which he could not recover; yours may be less marked—a sliding as it were down an inclined plane. I warn you of it;—I warn you against idleness, the parent of vice—the parent of those evil imaginings that make the soul a cage of unclean birds. I warn you against evil books—however fascinating;—against evil company—however gay and tempting. "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men—avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away." I warn you against vain amusements and places of evil resort—against the theater, the ball-room, the drinking club, the gaming table. I warn you of the wiles of her who lieth in wait at the corners of the streets;—"let not thine heart

decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her." I warn you to cleave to God's testimonies and walk in His ways. As I stood beneath that scaffold, the painful thought crossed my mind, has any omission of duty on my part toward this young man contributed in any manner to his end? I resolved that at least no other youth under my ministry should come to such an end unwarned by me. And I am here to-night to fulfill that vow, to discharge my soul of its heavy responsibility to you, *young men.* I warn you, therefore, in his name. I warn you by the memory of that dreadful scene. I warn you before God—Most High—*your* Judge and *mine.* And if there be a deeper note of warning still—I will be silent—that it may come to you from the *chambers of the dead*—from the Abyss of wo!

LECTURE VII.

THE BIBLE THE YOUNG MAN'S GUIDE.

PSALM CXIX. 9.—*Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.*

IN the preceding lectures, I have considered several of the temptations and dangers to which young men in city life are exposed. My object has been, by entering into detail, and by adopting a familiar and even colloquial style, to assure young men that their position is appreciated by those who undertake to counsel them from the pulpit, and that they are not looked upon as mere subjects for admonition and rebuke, but as objects of sympathy and hope. The occupant of the pulpit—of this pulpit certainly—does not belong to an order of beings distinct from and superior to mankind in general; he possesses no official sanctity; he holds no commission as the censor of public

morals, by which he is authorized to summon individuals or classes before him to receive admonition; he claims no authority over the opinions or the conduct of others, and desires no influence but that of reason and love. He is a man, with the sympathies and infirmities of a man, and with the experience of a man in temptation and in sin. He differs from any of his fellow men only so far as his heart has been brought under the renewing and the sanctifying power of the truth and the Spirit of God; and in proportion to his own experience of the blessed influence of the Gospel, is his desire that others should feel it also. This prompts him, in obedience to the instructions of Paul to Timothy, to "preach the word;" to be "instant in season and out of season;" to seize upon every occasion of usefulness; to study the circumstances and the peculiarities of his hearers; to classify them, "rightly dividing the word of truth;" to "watch in all things," and to "make full proof of his ministry."

It has not been as a theologian or a philosopher, much less as a cynic, having no relish

for the good things of the present life, that I have admonished young men of their temptations and dangers; but as *a young man*, who, having been mercifully delivered from the perils of a city and of College life, and having witnessed the untimely ruin of others, would gladly be the means of persuading some now in like peril, to shun the way of death, and to enter the way of peace and safety.

Doubtless these counsels would have greater weight from the lips of one venerable with the wisdom of age; and yet if I can lead you to regard the voice of heavenly wisdom, you will have a better counselor than any earthly Mentor. Hitherto my aim has chiefly been to point out to you your danger, with a minuteness of specification, and an earnestness of admonition, that should serve at least to put you upon your guard. I have not dwelt so much upon the way of escape; but if you are really awakened to a sense of danger, to show you the way of deliverance will be an easy and a pleasant task. It remains for me only to lead you deferentially to the Word of God.

But the counsels of age and experience in

this matter are not wanting. It is but a little while, since we were called to render our tribute of grief and respect to "the last of earth," as it was borne by an almost unbroken train of mourners, from the capitol at Washington, to the granite vault at Quincy. That eminent statesman and venerable sage, the purity of whose character will outlive alike the infirmities of constitutional temperament, and the virulence of political opposition, has left a legacy to the young men of America, in his letters to his son upon "the Bible and its Teachings," which is among the most valuable of the countless memorials of his genius and his virtue. Although these letters were penned in middle life, they express the unchanged opinions of the octogenarian. In the first of the series, he says, "so great is my veneration for the Bible, and so strong my belief, that when duly read and meditated on, it is of all books in the world, that which contributes most to make men good, wise and happy—that the earlier my children begin to read it, the more steadily they pursue the practice of reading it throughout their lives, the more lively and con-

fident will be my hopes that they will prove useful citizens to their country, respectable members of society, and a real blessing to their parents."

This was the deliberate opinion of one who was in the habit of spending the first hour after rising, in the study of the Bible in different languages, as "the most suitable manner of beginning the day," and who "made it a practice to read through the Bible once every year."

Kindred to this is the counsel of the wise man, speaking in the name of that heavenly wisdom with which he was pre-eminently endowed. "My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart. Say to wisdom, Thou art my sister, and call understanding thy kinswoman: . . . for wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it." Solomon was inspired to write his Proverbs, in order "to give subtilty to the simple,

to the young man knowledge and discretion."

The royal Psalmist, devoutly meditating upon the excellence of the revealed word of God, exclaims, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word."

To cleanse the way denotes, to lead a pure and blameless life: to restrain the passions and appetites of youth; to be temperate, chaste, upright, sincere, uncontaminated with the vices of the world.

How shall a young man keep himself pure? Purity is a jewel which young men know how to value in the female sex. Willing as they may be at times to consort with fallen virtue; base enough, even though they be, to compass that fall; yet in a sister, or in one whom they would call by a more endearing name, they demand as the first and the indispensable condition of respect and affection, *purity* of life, of mind, and of heart. The least taint, the least suspicion, nay, the least breath of suspicion upon her character, is damnable in their eyes.

But in himself, the young man is apt to look upon any impurity of thought, of feeling, of conversation, or of action, as a light matter; as an allowable part of his experience of the world; in fact he considers it an evidence of *greenness* for a young man to be ignorant of the language, the literature, the haunts, and the practices of the vicious; and of prudishness for him to be unwilling to associate with those who live only for sensual pleasure; though it is such simplicity and such shyness as an angel would exhibit in reference to these matters, if he should visit our world.

But purity of character is as lovely, and as desirable in a young *man*, as it is in a young woman. It is not a mark of effeminacy; and it ought not to be the peculiar honor of the female sex.

Let young men remember that what is so attractive in a sister or a wife, is no less attractive in a brother or a husband; and that he whose heart and life have become corrupt, is forever debarred from the full enjoyment of virtuous affections. He may reform; he may become a truly pious man; he may have much

enjoyment in a virtuous life, far more than he ever found in the opposite; but he can never forget what he has been; he can never lose the consciousness of self-degradation; he can never rid himself of a feeling of embarrassment in the presence of spotless purity; he can never cease to regret his derelictions from virtue; in a word, he can never become what he would have been if he had not fallen. The traces of past impurity are written upon the ineffaceable tablet of the memory, and will sometimes become painfully legible.

Said one of the most eloquent advocates of temperance, himself a reformed inebriate, and now a professed Christian, "The more I mingle with the virtuous and the good, the more painfully do I realize what I have lost,—what I too might have been, but for my debasing appetite."

A pure heart is above all price. Innocence is not effeminacy. Let him who is as yet uncontaminated with vice, keep himself pure. And let him whose habits and deportment have already become corrupt, diligently seek to cleanse his way.

Be it the first object with you, young men, to lead a pure, upright, blameless life; to be uncontaminated either in your opinions or in your conduct by the vices of the world; to preserve in respect to every form of immorality, the innocence of childhood, the purity of a virgin.

"Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word."

The young man needs a *Mentor:* one who, like the grave companion of Telemachus, shall always be ready with kind suggestions and judicious counsels; one in whom he can confide as in a father. Man learns by experience, and happy are they who can avail themselves of the experience of others, and thus avoid many a bitter and painful lesson, and acquire in a day the fruits of the wisdom of years.

What then shall be the young man's guide? He is apt to confide in his own judgment: to feel that his seniors are behind the times. This is true in almost every department of life. The unfledged theologian feels that he can determine questions of foreknowledge

and free-will which have puzzled all the doctors of the schools from Calvin to Edwards, and from Edwards to the metaphysicians of our own time. The tyro in medicine has already discovered that the books are full of blunders, and the lecturers full of whims; and has framed theories that are yet to revolutionize practice and to exterminate disease. The embryo politician is prepared to settle the great questions of free trade, of the extension of slavery, and of manifest destiny. So in commerce, and in business transactions generally, young men often feel that they could manage affairs much more vigorously and successfully than their employers.

Now it is unquestionably true, in almost every thing, that young men will sometimes do better than their seniors. Were it not so there could be no progress. When established institutions and usages of any sort are in the way of the improvement of society, there is need of a Young France, a Young Germany, a Young Italy, a Young Ireland, and a Young Democracy, to put the elements in motion, and to insure reform. Otherwise the world would sink into senility.

But in general, the ardor of youth needs to be combined with the experience and the cautiousness of age. Youth is precipitate: it leaps to its end: it is a stranger to self-control.

Hence a young man is seldom competent to the sole management of a difficult undertaking; and seldom can he be trusted with the management of himself. I have remarked heretofore, that in youth the passions and appetites are developed long before the judgment is matured. A young man acts much from impulse. When emancipated from the control of parents and teachers, he needs a more certain guide than his own untried and almost unformed judgment.

Shall he find that guide in *the current maxims of the world?* But these are fluctuating, and many of them are false. There is no uniform standard of opinion or conduct on moral subjects. Besides, all the maxims of the world are framed with a view to *present worldly interests;* but no principles are worthy of being adopted by an immortal mind, as a guide in the formation of character, which do not reach

forward into eternity. To live for pleasure, we have already seen, is not the true use of life. To live for honor, popularity, or power—there are lessons upon that point just now in the political world, which young men would do well to study.

To live for wealth, what is that but to imitate the rich fool in the parable?

The world has some sound maxims; but even the best of them, such as that "honesty is the best policy," are prudential rather than moral, the offspring of expediency rather than of principle; and they are often contradicted by other maxims, and by general practice.

The virtues of the world have been aptly termed "selfish virtues," mere matters of prudence; they are not deeply settled in the principles of the soul.

The current opinions and practices of the world cannot therefore be a competent or a safe guide to a young man in the formation of character.

Shall the young man take *the teachings of philosophy* for his guide? I here refer of course to that philosophy which is framed in-

dependently of revelation. There has been much philosophical speculation respecting the duty and the supreme interest of man. The ancient Grecian and Roman philosophy was chiefly concerned with these topics; and the same has been true of modern infidelity, whenever it has attempted any thing beyond mere opposition to revealed religion.

The works of infidels are not only accessible to young men whose curiosity may prompt them to seek such productions, but they are industriously circulated through various channels, and are forced upon the notice of those who have received a religious education.

The polished subtleties of Hume, the wire-drawn metaphysics of Hobbes and of Chubb, the historical perversions and sarcastic flings of Gibbon, are commonly left to scholars who may have a taste that way: but the affected learning and the pompous declamation of Volney, and the well-spiced ribaldry and vulgar smartness of Paine, are put forth in cheap editions, and are often quite taking with the young. The writings of infidels abound in ingenious and specious objections to the Scriptures; in

dogmatic assertions; in confident appeals to numbers and talent and respectability, as being upon their side; they make free use of sarcasm and ridicule, and give full license to animal inclinations. Hence their popularity.

Infidelity too is artfully wrought into works of fiction, and is blended with schemes of philanthropy and the philosophy of reform. I do not now propose to enter into a minute examination of its principles, but simply ask whether the philosophy of the skeptical school is a safe guide for a young man in the formation of character? That it is not, is apparent from the incongruous nature of its doctrines, from their general immoral tendency, and from the actual character of the great body of its disciples.

The ancient moralists never agreed in stating the first principles of moral action; and the writings of modern infidels will be found to be a jumble of incongruities and contradictions.

Many of their doctrines also are positively and grossly immoral. Mr. Hume justifies lewdness and adultery, sneers at modesty and

piety, and makes animal gratification the chief end of our being. Lord Bolingbroke licensed lewdness, both in theory and in practice; Lord Herbert maintained that lust and anger are no more blameworthy than a fever.

As to the Age of Reason, I hope there is not a more indecent book in the world. If there is one, I am thankful that I have never seen it; and I pity you if your mind has ever been brought into contact with such a book; my recollection of *that*, is like the memory of a dream in which toads, and spiders, and lizards, and the like loathsome creatures were crawling over me.

The personal character of the great body of avowed infidels is known to correspond with their principles; I need only name here Bolingbroke, Blount, Woolston, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Tom Paine. Surely their philosophy cannot be the young man's guide.

Happily there is a guide which is in all respects adapted to his wants. "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word."

The Bible is the young man's complete

guide to purity and to happiness. There are many aspects, aside from this, under which I might present the Bible as worthy of your regard: and as some of these, by giving attractiveness to the Scriptures, may induce you to read them for practical purposes, I will briefly state them here.

The Bible is the only authentic history of the earlier ages of the world. The mythology of the ancients abounds in fabulous accounts of the creation. There is a general resemblance in these accounts to each other, and to the leading facts recorded in the Bible. This is accounted for on the supposition that all these narratives were derived by tradition from one common source—an original revelation from God to man.

But if so, they became so mixed with fables, as to retain hardly a trace of their origin. They are so ridiculous that the very schoolboy laughs at them as he spells them out in his Latin or Greek reader. But there is nothing ridiculous in the scriptural account of the creation. It has the appearance of a sober, matter-of-fact narrative. The same is true of the

general history of the world, in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, and of the history of the Israelites in subsequent chapters and books. These bear the impress of accuracy upon their very face. From the beginning of profane or secular history, the allusions in the Scriptures to manners and customs, to geography and climate, to government and religion, are abundantly verified. The researches of scientific men also in the East, amid the ruins of ancient cities, confirm the accuracy of the statements of the Bible. This testimony is the more important as it comes from indifferent persons, and sometimes from the enemies of Christianity. The whole land of Syria, with its unchangeable scenery, its surviving names and monuments, its unbroken traditions, and its stereotyped customs, bears witness to the fact that the Bible was written there.

The Bible should be studied by every young man who would acquaint himself with the history of the world. Mr. Adams applies to the history contained in the Bible the observation which Cicero makes respecting that of one's own country, that "it is not so much praise-

worthy to be acquainted with, as it is shameful to be ignorant of it."

This history is written with great simplicity, brevity and precision, and possesses a charm which does not belong to any modern production. The earlier books of the Bible "are also the most ancient monuments of written language now extant in the world."

In a *literary* point of view, also, the Bible claims the attention of the young. In the words of the writer just referred to—than whom there have been few more competent to judge of such a matter—"For pathos of narrative; for the selection of incidents that go directly to the heart; for the picturesque in character and manner; the selection of circumstances that mark the individuality of persons; for copiousness, grandeur, and sublimity of imagery; for unanswerable cogency and closeness of reasoning; and for irresistible force of persuasion; no book in the world deserves to be so unceasingly studied, and so profoundly meditated upon as the Bible."

It is hardly known to the occasional readers of the Bible, that about one-third of the whole

is written in poetry, and some of it the most beautiful and the most sublime in the whole compass of human language. With the poetry of the Psalms we are made familiar through our metrical versions. But there is poetry in the Bible which no version can imitate, or even adequately express; which stirs the soul like a trumpet, and then softens it like a lute.

Take the following close translation of a part of the third chapter of Habakkuk.* The prophet is describing the appearance of Jehovah for the deliverance of His people at the Red Sea, and on similar occasions.

3. God from Teman cometh,
   And the holy from the mountain Paran.
   He covered the heavens with His splendor,
   And with His fame, filled is the earth.
4. And brightness was like the sun,
   Beams of light from His hand.
   And there the veil of His strength.
5. Before Him goeth the pestilence.
   And burning plagues go forth at His feet.
6. He stands and shakes the earth.
   He looks and makes to tremble the nations.

* For the substance of this translation, I am indebted to Prof. B. B. Edwards, of Andover Theo. Sem.

Broken to pieces are the everlasting mountains,
Sink down the eternal hills.
His ways are everlasting.

* * * * * *

10. Saw thee—quaked the mountains,
Floods of water passed on.
Uttered the deep his voice.
High his hands he lifted up.
11. Sun, moon, stood in their tent,
At the light of thine arrows they went;
At the splendor of the lightning of thy spear.
12. In anger thou didst march through the earth,
In indignation thou didst thresh the nations.
15. Thou didst trample on the sea with thy horses,
On the foaming of the mighty waters.

* * * * * *

Then follows a beautiful transition to the minor strain, in which the prophet thus expresses his confidence in God.

17. Though the fig-tree should not bear,
And there be no fruit in the vine;
Though the work of the olive should disappoint,
And the fields yield no bread;
The flock be cut off from the fold,
And no herd in the stall:
Still in Jehovah will I be glad,
I will exult in the God of my salvation.

Surely such poetry is better worth reading than sentimental ditties. There are abundant helps for those who wish to study it.

The Bible claims the attention of young men, also, on account of *the great principles of civil liberty which it inculcates.* The Scriptures do not treat of politics, nor of the science of government; but they do lay down certain great principles upon which civil government ought always to be established. In proportion to the regard which is paid to those principles, are the degree of civil liberty enjoyed among a people, and the security of men in the possession and the exercise of their natural rights.

France has adopted as the motto of her republic, "liberty, equality, fraternity." This is thought to be a new doctrine, a discovery of this nineteenth century; but even Frenchmen, when they come to examine the New Testament, find that this same doctrine was taught by Jesus Christ. With him it was not a mere rhetorical flourish or political watchword, but the great fundamental rule of human conduct.

We know that the Bible was the foundation of our liberties. It was the corner stone in the free institutions of our pilgrim fathers. A book which produced the reformation in the sixteenth century, which led to the great Puritan movement in the seventeenth century, and as a natural consequence, to the American revolution in the eighteenth, for that was a revolution not to acquire freedom, but to secure from aggression liberties already gained through the working of the principles of the Puritans —a book which was the acknowledged guide of Washington, and Jay, and Henry, and Adams, and which is now the great charter of the liberties and the rights of men, for nations that are throwing off the yoke of tyranny and superstition; such a book is worthy of the attention of every young man.

If asked for the original charter of American liberties, I would not point to the Declaration of Independence, nor to the Constitution of the United States; but to that little compact formed in the cabin of the May Flower, with prayer to God, and on the basis of His inspired word. This is no idle boast. If so, it is a

boast so often repeated, as to call for investigation on the part of those who are soon to be the strength of the body politic.

So, too, the Bible well deserves the consideration of the young, in view of *its general adaptation to the wants of men and its effects upon the social condition of the world.* These may be traced in history, and in present contrasts. Wherever the Bible has been introduced among a people, the tendency of that people has been toward the highest form of civilization. Barbarism, oppression, cruelty, and the grosser forms of vice disappear before it.

Countries lying side by side strike the eye of the traveler with an appearance of industry, thrift, enterprise, and prosperity, or of general degradation and misery, according as the Bible has been allowed or restrained among the people.

But it is not for the sake of these general views and principles, that I now commend the Bible to young men. What I have said in this general way, may possibly awaken in some minds a new interest in the study of the

Scriptures; but my wish now is to recommend the Bible to young men as their *guide*—their personal friend and counselor.

1. In this view, the first thing to be noticed is the claim which the Bible has as *a revelation from God.* It contains the will of our Maker, not as inferred from our own mental and moral constitution, and from the relation which we sustain to Him, but as expressly communicated by Himself. God here condescends to become our teacher; He gives us a map of the way which we are to travel; He gives us written instructions as to the duties we are to perform.

The *origin* of the Bible entitles it to the first consideration. It contains neither the blind oracles of heathen mythology, nor the fantastic speculations of Grecian philosophy. It is the word of God.

2. *There is a refining and elevating influence exerted over the mind by habitual contact with the Bible,* which fits that book to be preeminently the companion and the guide of youth. I speak here of an influence exerted as it were insensibly, upon every reader of the

Bible, and not merely of that experienced by the devout student. Young men are benefited by intercourse with good society. Every man who moves in such society acquires a peculiar polish, a refinement of manner, as the natural result. Very much the same effect is experienced morally, by bringing the mind into contact with pure and lofty sentiments, or with good models of character. On this principle Alexander formed his character upon that of Achilles: Homer was his companion by day and by night.

But what book can compare with the Bible for such sentiments and such models? A converted infidel declares that one thing which shook his infidelity was the contrast between the styles of Christian and of infidel writers. The former evinced meekness, modesty, calmness, candor, impartiality, and a spirit of kindness in all their discussions: the latter, a bitter and malignant spirit, which filled their pages with self-complacent ridicule, with violent personalities, and often with profane and indecent allusions. Compare the Bible with any infidel production in this particular. There is a pure

atmosphere around the word of God. One comes in contact there with nothing but what is noble, and pure, and good. There we meet the patriarchs in the simple piety of those early times; there we meet the holy, and the heroic of succeeding generations; there we meet the great teacher and the Savior of men.

3. *The system of morality contained in the Bible is perfect.* Compare the ten commandments with any other code of morals; compare the sermon on the mount with the instructions of any ancient pagan sage, or any modern infidel philosopher. This system is enforced, moreover, by the purest motives, and the highest sanctions. Christ taught no commonplace morality; He contemplated perfection. To love God and man, to forgive injuries, to love even enemies, to be just, and temperate, and chaste, and upright in all things—these are peculiar precepts, illustrated and enforced by the example of Christ. Where shall the young man find a better instructor? Where else shall he find a system of morality in which he can trust?

But let us look still more closely at some

particulars in which the Bible is peculiarly fitted to be the guide of young men.

The Bible is a *competent* guide. He who undertakes the office of a guide, should have a thorough knowledge of the way, and ample preparation for all the possible exigencies of the journey. Especially should this be true of one who would lead others through the moral dangers of this life, to a state of future blessedness. The guide of character, the guide of the soul, has the most difficult and the most responsible of all earthly vocations. But the guidance which the Bible offers is that of divine wisdom. He who made you, there tells you what you must do to be happy; He who made all worlds, tells you what you must do to become an inhabitant of heaven; He who knows what will be in the future, tells you how you can meet every change and trial that awaits you, and how you may become for ever blessed. This book is competent to teach you; it will be a lamp to your feet—a light to your path. It will be a safe guide—it will be an unerring guide; never at fault and never surprised.

The Bible is a *sincere* and *faithful* guide. The lone traveler in the woods or up the mountain heights, in a strange land and among a treacherous people, goes shuddering through the darkness fearing an ambuscade or a sudden assault. Many a traveler's bones lie bleaching in the jungles of India, and in the mountain passes of Mexico, a witness to the faithlessness and cruelty of professional guides: and often where life is unharmed, the traveler is stripped of money and valuables, and even of apparel, and is deserted in the midst of his uncertain and perilous journey. Sometimes he is led by a wrong route and under false pretences, and is betrayed into the hands of those who suffer men to tell no tales. So there are false guides in morals. He who with fair speeches persuades men to adopt his principles, will sometimes lead them by many a winding, pleasing path to the den of unclean spirits, or to the brink of a precipice, or will strip them of all that is lovely and good, and will leave them naked and buffeted, to become the jest of fools, or the prey of ravenous beasts and reptiles.

But the Bible is an honest guide; altogether

trustworthy. It is disinterested. It has no selfish aims. It has been tried and found faithful. It has been doing the office of guiding men through the world for many centuries; and of the millions who have trusted in it, not one has ever been deceived. No one who has followed it has ever failed to form a good character, or to find in death abundant consolation and support.

The Bible is a *permanent* guide. Our earthly friends and counselors, however valuable, cannot be retained by us. Often does the young man in seasons of perplexity wish that his father was alive, or that his mother, who was always so quick to discern what was right, could be with him for a moment; but they are gone. If the young man has parents living, he cannot always be with them, nor will they always continue. There is no friend whom we can lean upon absolutely and permanently in this changing world. But we can always have the Bible. That never grows old; that never grows weary; that never dies. We can always have the Bible with us; our friend, our guide, our bosom friend, our unfal-

tering guide, even till we shall enter the valley of the shadow of death; nay, it will then be a rod and a staff to comfort us, and it will not leave us till it has delivered us safely to the angels who shall come to conduct us to the city.

Young man, you are in a perilous world. To you every thing may appear bright, and glittering, and full of promise. You may feel light-hearted, secure, and strong; ready to undertake any thing that may open for your advantage, and confident of success. But an inspired Apostle bids me exhort young men to be sober-minded; not gloomy and morose, but thoughtful and serious. The Psalmist bids you *take heed* to your way. There is much in your position to make you serious. You have passed the free, careless period of childhood, and are growing up to the duties and the responsibilities of manhood. Your course for life is now to be determined, and as that is determined, so probably will be decided your destiny in another world. You must make your decision soon. Time is hurrying you onward. It makes no stay. You will soon cease to be a

young man. What you shall do with life; how you shall spend it; and what this life shall accomplish with reference to your immortal existence, these are questions which cannot be postponed. You are even now deciding them. You are encompassed with dangers, and beset with temptations on every hand.

I have warned you of a few of them, and but a few—not a tithe of those that really exist. You need a safeguard, a protector, a counselor, a guide. And this is what I have endeavored this evening to recommend to you. *Have you a Bible?* One that you can call your *own?* If not, let it be your first care to purchase one. Have you a Bible? Yes; I remember now; you have one which your mother gave you, and in which she wrote your name, with some little scrap of counsel, or of sacred poetry. But where is that Bible? It lies neglected in your trunk, or covered with dust upon your shelf. This is the way that you have treated the counsels of heavenly wisdom—the voice of the infinite God. O young man, as you prize your soul,

neglect God's word no longer. Make it the man of your counsel and the guide of your life.

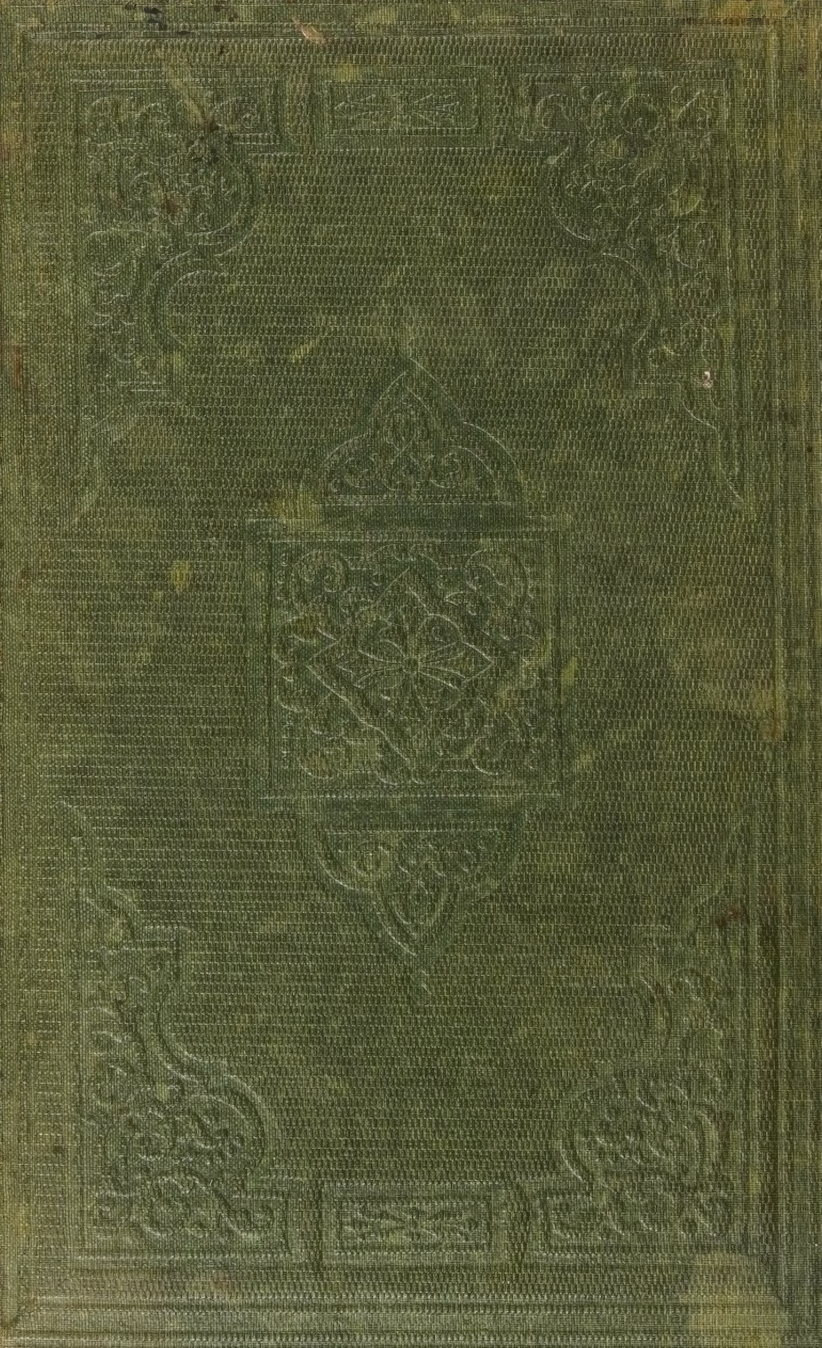
Again I remind you that this book has been tried. It is no fiction. It has never disappointed a single soul in the solemn hour of death. It has given to multitudes in that hour a foretaste of celestial glory. But what is death without the Bible? View it under its most favorable aspect as exhibited by a dying nobleman of wealth and intelligence in the following letter to a friend.*

"DEAR SIR:—Before you receive this, my final state will be determined by the Judge of all the earth. In a few days at most, perhaps in a few hours, the inscrutable sentence will be passed. It is impossible for me to express the present disposition of my soul—the vast uncertainty I am struggling with! No words can paint the force and vivacity of my apprehensions. Every doubt wears the face of horror, and would perfectly overcome me, but for some faint beams of hope which dart across the tremendous gloom! What tongue can utter the anguish of a soul suspended between the extremes of infinite joy and eternal misery. I am throwing my last stake for eternity, and

* Lectures to Young Men by Rev. R. W. Clark, p. 140.

tremble and shudder for the important issue. . . . It is not giving up my breath, at which I shrink. It is not being for ever insensible. It is a terrible hearafter—that something beyond the grave, at which I recoil. Those great realities which in the hours of mirth and vanity I treated as phantoms—as the idle dreams of superstitious people—these start forth and dare me now in their most terrible demonstration.

"My awakened conscience feels something of that eternal vengeance I have often defied. Oh! to what heights of madness is it possible for human nature to reach! What extravagance to jest with death! to laugh at damnation! to sport with eternal chains! and recreate a jovial fancy with the scenes of eternal misery! Oh! my friend, with what horror do I recall the hours of vanity we have wasted together! But I have a splendid passage to the grave! I die in state, and languish under a gilded canopy. I am expiring on soft and downy pillows, and am respectfully attended by my servants and physicians. My dependants sigh; my sisters weep; my father bends beneath a load of years and grief; my lovely wife, pale and silent, conceals her inward anguish; my friend, who was as my own soul, suppresses his sighs, and leaves me to hide his secret grief. But oh! which of these will answer my summons at the high tribunal? Which of them will bail me from the arrest of death? Who will descend into the dark prison of the grave for me? While some flattering panegyric is pronounced at my interment, I may be hearing my just condemnation at a supreme

tribunal; where an unerring verdict may sentence me to everlasting infamy! Adieu, my dear friend, till we meet in the world of spirits."

Adieu, young men, till we meet in the world of spirits. We shall not all meet again in this world. But we part, I trust, under better auspices, and with better hopes than those of the dying infidel. Go with these words of counsel to your several paths of duty and of usefulness; make the word of God your guide, and we shall hereafter renew this brief acquaintance, with eternal joy.